

THE FORTIFICATIONS OF ARTVIN: A SECOND PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE MARCHLANDS OF NORTHEAST TURKEY

ROBERT W. EDWARDS

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Report is to describe all of the medieval fortifications that were visited during my 1983 field survey of the *vilâyet* of Artvin and its immediate environs.¹ Because of the relative inaccessibility of this province, only a few surveys of the ecclesiastical architecture have ever been undertaken.² Generally, the military sites have been ignored. This disinterest can be blamed in part on the paucity of published histories for the region. Many of the traditional sources on eastern Turkey, such as Evliya Çelebi, give almost no specific information. This study of the Artvin region is a continuation of my first Preliminary Report on the Marchlands, which appeared in volume 39 of the

Dumbarton Oaks Papers.³ As with my previous article, the sites here will be catalogued by their modern Turkish names and followed by a brief history. They are arranged in a geographical sequence from west to east. The plan and evaluation of each site are based on a study of the unexcavated surface remains. Although many fortresses in the *vilâyet* still remain unexplored,⁴ there is more than sufficient

¹I would like to extend my warmest thanks to Messrs. Peter J. Kasavan and Jack Herbert for joining me on this field survey and for their invaluable help in preparing the plans. All of the plans in this and my previous *DOP* Reports were drawn with a calibrated transit. I am especially grateful to Wakhtang Djobadze for his advice on the churches of the Marchlands and to Robert Thomson and Robert Hews for polishing my translation of select passages from the *Aṣṣarḥaṣ'oyc'*. Alexander Kazhdan deserves special acknowledgment for making fathomable the all too cryptic prose of Nikolai Marr. This article was written during my fellowship at Dumbarton Oaks.

²N. Marr, *Dnevnik' poezdki v' Šavšetiju i Klaržetiju* (St. Petersburg, 1911 = comm. in *Žitie*, below, note 4); A. Pavlinov, *Materialy po arxeologii Kavkaza* 3 (Moscow, 1893); A. Khatchatrian, "Les églises cruciformes du Tayq," *CahArch* 17 (1967); N. and M. Thierry, "Notes d'un nouveau voyage en Géorgie Turque," *Bedi Kartlisa* 25 (1968); E. Takaišvili, *Materialy po arxeologii Kavkaza* 12 (Moscow, 1909); idem, *Arxeologičeskaja ekspedicija 1917-go goda v južnye provincii Gruzii* (Tbilisi, 1952); idem, *Expédition archéologique en Kola-Oltisi et en Čangli* (1907) (Paris, 1938); V. Beridze, *Mesto pamjatnikov Tao-Klardžeti v istorii Gruzinskoj arhitektury* (Tbilisi, 1981); and I. Zdanévitch, *L'itinéraire géorgien de Ruy Gonzales de Clavijo et les églises aux confins de l'Atabégat* (Paris, 1966).

For the modern Turkish attitude regarding the preservation of the churches in the Marchlands see B. Çetinoğlu, "İşhan Church," *İlgi* no. 38 (January, 1984), 28–31.

³R. Edwards, "Medieval Architecture in the Oltu-Penek Valley: A Preliminary Report on the Marchlands of Northeast Turkey," *DOP* 39 (1985) (hereafter First Preliminary Report), 15–37.

⁴The medieval fortresses that I was unable to photograph and explore are: Vazriya (or Sveti, just northeast of Artvin), Yeniöl (perhaps the Sôtēroupolis/Bourzō on the Byzantine frontier; see: N. Oikonomidēs, *Les listes de préséance byzantines des IX^e et X^e siècles* [Paris, 1972], 362; and idem, "L'organisation de la frontière orientale de Byzance," *XIV^e Congrès International des Etudes Byzantines, Rapports II* [Bucharest, 1971], 81 f), Vardosan (i.e., Erušet'i; see I. Kökten, "1952 Yılında Yaptığım Tarihöncesi Araştırmaları Hakkında," *Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Dergisi* 11 [1953], map No. 3), Harap (perhaps the site of Utzi on the 1769 "Carte de l'Arménie, Géorgie et pays voisins" by Bellin), and the five sites directly north and west of Yusufeli (the most northerly of the five, Kel Kalesi, is near the village of Hevisker above the west bank of the Çoruh opposite Ziyaret Dağ). It is likely that other fortified sites still remain to be discovered, especially along the northern fringes of the province where the Turkish military has imposed extensive travel restrictions.

Concerning the location and nature of Šatberd, I can offer little that is new. The suffix "-berd" would lead one to conclude that the site is fortified, but Georgii Merčul' (*Žitie Sb. Grigorija Xandziškago*, intro., trans., and comm. N. Marr [St. Petersburg, 1911], 84, 91, 96, 106–8 [trans.]), who writes his biography of St. Gregory in the second half of the 10th century, refers only to the founding of Georgian monasteries at Šatberd (cf. P. Peeters, *Histoires monastiques géorgiennes*, AB 36–37 [1917–19], 210–18, 248 f, 275–78, 295–99). Marr (Georgii Merčul', *Žitie*, 113 f, 135–46 [comm.]) identifies Šatberd with the late 19th-century Porta; he also notes the presence of a tower above the ravine of Porta (ibid., 153 [comm.]). W. Allen (*A History of the Georgian*

material herein to analyze the sites in a broad topographical context. A reassessment of the Georgian and Armenian provinces in this region is confined to the conclusion.

The topography of the province of Artvin is unlike that of any other district in Anatolia or the Caucasus.⁵ The entire region is covered by a tightly packed network of mountains; the very narrow canyons are cut by streams and rivers which render the rock faces in unusually sharp relief. The scale of the surroundings is so enormous and the vertical walls of the cliffs rise so abruptly that the visitor feels diminished and even threatened. Agricultural lands are confined to the narrow banks of the major watercourses (Fig. 16); some crops are terraced on the eroded summits of the cliffs, where the lack of water severely restricts the growing periods. The only year-round source of water on these plateaus is obtained from the occasional artesian well. Such conditions limit the size of permanent settlements significantly. Near the plain of Ardahan (Georgian: Artani) the *yaylalar* of the Yalnızçam Silsilesi (the lower Arsiani Mountains) attract a sizable population of nomads each summer.

The principal river in the *vilâyet* of Artvin is the Çoruh (Greek: Boas, Akampsis; Georgian: Çoroxi; Armenian: Voh). On its northward journey to the Black Sea it is supplemented near the east flank of Sardaret Dağ (Fig. 1) by the Merehevi Suyu (İmer Khevi), which flows from the mountains north and northwest of Şavşat (Georgian: Şavšet'i). Along the border of the adjacent *vilâyet* of Kars the great Kur(a) River (Greek: Kuros; Latin: Cyr(n)us; Georgian: Mtkuari) forms in the region of modern Okam and passes through Ardahan on its long journey to the Caspian. All of the major roads (both medieval and modern), which are passable today by car, follow the principal rivers either along their banks or on the plateaus above. The only exceptions are the three roads that cross the lower Arsiani Mountains. The route linking Ardanuç (Georgian: Artanuĭi) and Ardahan via the Yalnızçam Pass

and Kinzozamal and the one joining Şavşat and Ardahan via Vardosan (Georgian: Erušet'i) are both ancient thoroughfares. The direct road linking Şavşat and Ardahan via Lori is a modern construction of the Turkish military. The medieval fortifications are positioned so as to guard the lines of communication and the major routes of trade.

What many modern commentators have failed to understand is that the various medieval districts in the Marchlands were not amorphous masses divided by an occasional river—a demarkation that is indefensible because of its relative accessibility—but they were precise units delineated by mountain ranges.⁶ Only by reason of its *immediate* proximity to a mountainous boundary and through a process of metonymy in the late classical and medieval texts does a certain river become a line of demarkation. The peaks aligned to Ziyaret Dağ along the east flank of the Çoruh form the western border of the Georgian district of Klarjet'i (Greek: Cholarzēnē). The administrative capital of this region, the fortress of Ardanuç,⁷ lies below the northern chain of mountains that extend west from the Kordevan Dağ. The adjacent district of Şavşat to the north is defined by the mountains above the banks of the Merehevi Suyu and the imposing Arsiani range at the east. The latter not only formed part of the eastern flank of Klarjet'i, but its eastern spurs separated the district and fortress of Erušet'i from the region of Artani. The Armenian province of Gugark' (Greek: Gōgarēnē; Georgian: Somhet'i, Gogarene) bordered on these four topographical units.

People [London, 1932], 297, 430) accepts this identification (placing Porta near the Vazriya on my Fig. 1 and not at Orta/Berta), while P. Ingoroqva (*Giorgi Merč'ule* [Tbilisi, 1954], 296 ff) and Zdanévitch (*Itinéraire*, 7, 12) place Şatberd in the vicinity of Ardanuç. Cf. Thierry, "Notes" (above, note 2), 52 ff. Şatberd is one of the few recognizable Armenian toponyms west of the lower Arsiani Mts. (see R. Blake and S. Der Nersessian, "The Gospels of Bert'ay: An Old-Georgian MS. of the Tenth Century," *Byz* 16 [1942–43], 283).

⁵W. Allen, "The March-Lands of Georgia," *GJ* 74 (1929), 150 ff; and D. Bakradze, *Arxeologičeskoe putešestvie po Gurii i Adčare* (St. Petersburg, 1878), map.

⁶Although Wakhoucht, the 18th-century Georgian historian and geographer, worked with very inaccurate topographical charts, he clearly understood that the boundaries of the Georgian districts were determined by the mountain ranges. Cf.: T. Wakhoucht, *Description géographique de la Géorgie, publiée d'après l'original autographe par M. Brosset* (St. Petersburg, 1842), xv ff, 114 ff, and map No. 1; Georgii Merčul', *Žitie*, 102 (trans.); Ingoroqva, *Giorgi Merč'ule*, 296 ff; S. Eremyan, *Hayastana əst "Aşxarhac'oyc'"-i* (Erevan, 1963), 15 ff and map; T. Hakobyan, *Hayastani patmakan aşxarhagru'yun*, 2nd ed. (Erevan, 1984), 86–108, 114, 235–46, 271; R. İsxanyan, "C'avalı ančštut'yun karevor hratarakut'yan mej," *Lraber* 3 (1966), 109–12; "Gugark'," in *Haykakan Sovetakan Hanragitaran* 3 (Erevan, 1977), 240 f; R. Hews, "Armenia according to the Aşxarhac'oyc'," *REArm*, n.s. 2 (1965), 319 ff; N. Adontz, *Armenia in the Period of Justinian*, trans. and rev. N. Garsoïan (Lisbon, 1970), 7–23, 235–51; H. Hübschmann, *Die altarmenischen Ortsnamen* (Straßburg, 1904), 275 f, 353–57; E. Honigmann, *Die Ostgrenze des byzantinischen Reiches von 363 bis 1071* (Brussels, 1935), 186, 147–70; and N. Garsoïan, "Armenia, Geography," *Dictionary of the Middle Ages*, ed. J. Strayer, I (New York, 1982), 470–74.

⁷C. Toumanoff, *Studies in Christian Caucasian History* (Washington, D.C., 1963), 439.

Artvin

The provincial capital of the *vilâyet* of Artvin (Georgian: Art'vani; Armenian: Art'vini) covers part of Sardanet Dağ⁸ near the point where the Çoruh River turns from its most eastern extension to the west (Fig. 3). The bulk of the civilian settlement, which numbers almost 18,000, is terraced on the side of the mountain above the medieval fortress. The latter is now surrounded by a large Turkish army post and is consequently off limits to tourists. With the kind permission of the commandant of Artvin, I and my two assistants were allowed to spend the daylight hours of one day (30 August 1983) in a survey of the medieval site. The military guards who accompanied us prohibited only photographs of the fortress in which views of the modern defenses below would be included.

Unfortunately, we have no specific information on the early history of the fortress. By reason of its location it must have been one of the principal centers in the Georgian district of Nigali.⁹ Although this site does appear on the eighteenth-century maps by Bellin and J. De L'Isle¹⁰ as the fortress of Ari-vani and Artvani respectively, it is listed without a commentary in the study of T. Wakhoucht as the small village of Arthuvani/Arthwan(i).¹¹ C. Toumanoff is likewise silent about its past. Ł. Inčičean merely notes that the fortress, which was abandoned in his time, was ancient.¹² The only description of the site was made by K. Koch in 1844.¹³ He

discusses the bailey and its four-sided donjon from the interior.¹⁴ He notes that the latter was of such strength that it could only be captured with cannons. During this survey three cisterns were found, as well as a desiccated spring. Koch reports that just prior to his visit the local governor, Murat-Ali Bey, advertised his campaign for law and order by tossing twenty-four convicted thieves into the river from the north circuit of the fortress. He observes the all-too-modern phenomenon of new construction being built with masonry recycled from the abandoned fortress. When Koch visits the adjacent town he finds a thousand houses and a population of six to seven thousand, the largest and most influential community being the Armenian.¹⁵ A contemporary of Koch's was told that the Armenian bishop of Artvin had received permission to erect a new church that was befitting the capital of the district (*kaza*) of Livanah (part of the *sancak* of Lazistan in the *vilâyet* of Trebizond).¹⁶ Other visitors have simply noted the presence of a castle.¹⁷

On the south bank of the river below the level of the town the fortress of Artvin covers the summit of an oblong precipice of rock (Fig. 2). The north, east, and south flanks of this outcrop are almost sheer (Fig. 4). It is at the west where a more gentle slope necessitated the construction of the impressive defenses (Fig. 5). From the fortress there is a

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 165.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 159–61. In the mid-17th century Hakob Karnec'i (*Tetagir verin Hayoc'*, ed. K. Kostaneanc' [Vağaršapat, 1903], 51) characterizes Artvin as a "Georgian" village. The major shift in ethnic distribution must have occurred by the mid-19th century. In the early 20th century the site had 8,000 denizens, of whom 5,500 were Armenian Catholics. The statistics provided by Mačavariani ("Artvin," 6, 16) for the year 1893 are similar; he also specified that the Sunni population of 1,497 is larger than the orthodox Armenian at 1,058. He adds that the local Georgians, who were once Christian, had converted in mass to Islam generations before because they had lost contact with the Georgian centers to the north. It is quite likely that these Sunni are ethnic Georgians. Cf. S. Ep'rikean, "Arduin," *Paikerazara Bnašxarhik Bažaran* 1 (Venice, 1903–5), 294–96; V. Vardanyan, "Ardivin," *Haykakan Sovetakan Hanragitaran* 2 (Erevan, 1976), 17 f; and *Ezeroum ou topographie de la haute Arménie, texte arménien de Hakovb Karnétsi*, trans. and comm. F. Macler (Paris, 1919), 70 note 4.

¹⁶ M. Guarracino, "Notes of an Excursion from Batum to Artvin," *GJ* 15 (1845), 300 f. This may be the Gregorian-Armenian Church of the Virgin discussed by Marr (Georgii Merčul', *Žitie*, 189 ff [comm.]). A Georgian Gospel with miraculous healing powers was deposited therein.

Cf. *British Documents on Ottoman Armenians*, I, ed. B. Şimşir (Ankara, 1982), 56 f, 71, 158, 174, 376, 632.

¹⁷ P. Kinross, *Within the Taurus* (London, 1954), 41. During the period from 1878 to 1914 the Russians occupied Artvin and in all probability garrisoned the fortress. They recaptured the site from the Turks in 1915 and returned it along with Ardahan and most of the Marchlands under the terms of the Treaty of Kars (13 Oct. 1921). See W. Allen and P. Muratoff, *Caucasian Battlefields* (Cambridge, 1953), 222 f, 248, 295, 500; and F. Taeschner, "Artvin," *EP* (1960), 667.

⁸ On the Deutsche Heereskarte ("Artvin," Blatt-Nr. B-XV, 1:200,000, 1943) the fortress-mountain bears this name.

⁹ K. Mačavariani ("Gorod' Artvin," *Sbornik materjalov dlja opisanija mestnostej i plemen Kavkaza* 22 [1897], 8 f) mentions the two oral traditions of the local Armenian population concerning the origin of the name Artvin. The first involves the migration of settlers from the ancient city of Dvin to their new town of "Ardivin," and the second is about the discovery of an old church in the area above the fortress by two shepherds from the neighboring village of Sveti (Vazriya). Many of the residents of Sveti moved to the site and named it after one of the shepherds, Arutin. The likelihood that "Artvin" is an Armenian toponym must indicate that the original Georgian name for this site is lost. During the Ottoman period the Armenians migrated into Nigali in large numbers. See Toumanoff, *Studies*, 433 note 30, 455 note 73, 438 f note 3.

¹⁰ J. De L'Isle, "Carte de la Géorgie," 1766, rpr. 1775; and Bellin, "Carte de l'Arménie . . .," 1769.

¹¹ Wakhoucht, *Description*, 115, map No. 1. According to Mačavariani ("Artvin," 12), a local legend ascribes the construction of the fortress to Queen Tamar (1184–1212). When digging in the foundation of the town, the locals found a large number of "ancient Byzantine coins."

¹² M. Brosset, "Description de l'ancienne Géorgie turke, comprenant le pachalik d'Akhaltzikhé et le Gouria; traduit de l'arménien du docteur Indjidjian," *JA* 13 (1834), 471.

¹³ K. Koch, *Wanderungen im Oriente während der Jahre 1843 und 1844*, II, *Reise im pontische Gebirge und türkischen Armenien* (Weimar, 1846), 162 ff.

commanding view of the strategic road on the north bank of the river to both the east and the west (Fig. 3). The fortress consists of a single bailey flanked at the south by a somewhat bulbous lower-level entrance complex (B to F, Fig. 2). At the extreme west on the apex of the outcrop is an almost rectangular donjon.

To approach the site one simply follows the path through the army's modern obstacle course and ascends to point A (Fig. 2) on the southwest flank of the outcrop (Figs. 5, 7). Even at close range the circuit of the fortress seems to be camouflaged in the rock mass. The walls, which rise and twist to conform to the sinuosities of the outcrop, are made of stones quarried from the brown, pastel blue, and rust-colored flanks of the rocky pedestal. The masonry used throughout the fortress is very consistent and appears to represent one period of construction. There is no distinction in quality and size between the interior (Fig. 6) and exterior (Fig. 8) facing stones. Each stone is crudely cut, and there is no attempt to achieve a standard shape. The blocks are layered in irregular courses and sealed on the exterior by mortar and rock chips. A poured core of fieldstones and mortar anchors each course to a solid foundation.

The military role of this site was recently revived when the fortress was integrated into the obstacle course to allow the advanced recruits to practice their techniques for scaling rocks. Almost midway between the donjon and point A (Figs. 2, 5) an appropriate slogan has been painted on the rock face: *Tanrım Dağcıyı Korum* ("May God protect the mountain climber"). Directly above, on the lower courses of the donjon, is a more patriotic phrase: *Her Şey Vatan için* ("Everything for the nation"). The other modern additions include posters of Atatürk above postern C and near room I, as well as an electric cable which runs through the bailey into the donjon (Figs. 6, 10). The fortress functions as a command center during training exercises.

From point A to gate B a now shattered staircase rises on a retaining wall which is skillfully wedged in a natural cleft of rock (Fig. 7). Because the lower steps are missing, an ascent can be made only with difficulty. The jambs that once framed gate B are missing today. Inside the entrance enclosure there is a steep ascent which makes a 180° turn just northwest of postern C. A series of masoned steps leads to door D, the now jambless entrance into the main bailey (Fig. 8). The concave, two-storey north wall of the entrance enclosure, which stretches from E to F, is skillfully fitted with defenses. At the first

level is a series of squareheaded, embrasured openings. There is also evidence of an occasional roundheaded niche in the area of E. At the second level (not shown on Fig. 2) are seven overhanging machicolations of a rather unique design. From the interior side (Fig. 6) they appear to be square-headed embrasures; protruding wooden beams below the sill level indicate that each archer was supported by a separate platform. On the exterior (Fig. 8) two of the beams extend through the wall so that their ends meet to form the apex of a triangle. These posts serve as a support for the bulging mass of the exterior facing which forms the overhang. Through the interior space of the triangle each archer could command part of the enclosure and drop rocks on those ascending the steps to D. Directly above door D only the beams of the machicolation survive. Today there is no evidence of crenellations on the top of the wall.

There are a few significant features on the interior of the bailey. The undulating circuit between F and G has a series of squareheaded embrasured loopholes at the first level and overhanging machicolations at the second. At point G it appears that two large terra-cotta storage jars were imbedded in masonry. There is a possibility that tower H functioned as a chapel. The purpose of the adjoining room I to the west is also unknown. Its northern and eastern walls stand to almost two meters in height. The wall that extends from the shattered southwest corner of I acts as a revetment to prevent the shifting of soil to the north. Northwest of room I is the oval cistern J. Much of its domical roof has collapsed; the south flank of the cistern is now buried in debris. The partially buried, barrel-vaulted cistern at K was not surveyed during my visit, and its location on the plan (Fig. 2) is marked with two concentric circles. The shattered door at M gives access to a very narrow ledge outside the circuit. One of the most impressive feats of engineering skill at this site is the wall that connects door M to the junction at N (Fig. 9). Since it was built on a nearly vertical cliff, the masons carefully positioned wooden headers at close intervals to enhance the wall's stability.

The donjon O is entered by a single door at the east, which is joined to the bailey below by a well-worn pathway (Fig. 10). From the placement of joist holes on the interior it appears that this enclosure was once divided into three levels by wooden floors. On the west flank at the very top there are at least four overhanging machicolations (not shown on plan, Fig. 2; cf. Fig. 5). At the second and first lev-

els there are embrasured windows and an occasional niche. Masoned walls once partitioned the ground level of the donjon.

Ferhath

Just southwest of the Ardanuç Suyu and its adjacent federal highway (*devlet yolu*) is an outcrop whose upper face has been fortified with an impressive circuit and towers (Fig. 12). Located about 5 km northwest of Ardanuç Kalesi and about 2 km north of Ferhatlı Köy,¹⁸ this site has been identified with the medieval Akhiz/Ahiza.¹⁹ According to Juanşer this fortress was restored by King Vakh-tang I Gorgasal in the late fifth century and became the seat of a bishop after 485.²⁰ Other events concerning the medieval history of the fortress are obscure. The ecclesiastical buildings near the fortress are unpublished.²¹ The original civilian settlement, unlike the modern hamlets which hug the banks of the river (Fig. 16), was probably located adjacent to the fortress at the south or atop one of the elevated plateaus. In 1844 Koch described this beautiful river valley, and he sighted Ferhatlı Kalesi, which he called "Godschiboreth."²² He did not explore the latter.

With a commanding view of the river valley to both the northwest (Fig. 16) and the east (Fig. 15), this site could easily secure the major access into Ardanuç and consequently a sizable proportion of the trade through the Marchlands. The most impressive defenses at the north look down upon the road (Fig. 13) and define the limits of the bailey above the cliffs (C through H on Fig. 11). The upper donjon, of which only a few fragmentary walls survive (I on Fig. 11), is perched on the oblong summit at the southwest. Access to the bailey is gained at the southeast through a natural cleft in the rock face (Fig. 14). Partially scarped and masoned stairs ascend the ledges and pivot at point B. There are few tangible remains of the original gate complex. The outer door was framed at the west by tower A (Fig. 14; A on Fig. 11). Immediately north of the tower there are three large scarped

niches and an angled rock face. Three similar niches are positioned on the opposite side of the path. These may have supported wooden beams on the interior of the gatehouse. Eight meters northeast of tower A there is a scarped corner above the flight of steps. This corner may have been part of an inner gate.

From the interior of the bailey the north defenses reveal a number of impressive features. For the most part the masonry consists of relatively well cut square and rectangular blocks of ashlar laid in regular courses (Fig. 17). The interior facing stones (Fig. 19) are slightly smaller than those of the exterior (Fig. 18). The outer margins of each course are secured by rock chips and mortar; a poured core of mortar, rubble, and sand solidifies the facing stones into a vertical mass. In the upper levels of the circuit and towers the outer margins of mortar have eroded away more rapidly than in the lower levels (Fig. 13). It is common to have the larger stones in the lower courses (Fig. 15) or alternating with courses of smaller stones in the upper levels to form broad stripes (Fig. 17). The only real anomaly in the masonry is in tower A (Fig. 14). Here the stones are more crudely cut, and in general they have an elongated appearance which is not seen elsewhere. Tower A probably represents a separate period of construction. Because the sizes of the courses vary greatly, it is difficult to determine the average dimensions of a facing stone.

Moving from east to west the first major salient in the north facade is tower C (Figs. 13, 18). In the base of the tower are the jambs and shattered top of a squareheaded door. Access to the door was obtained by a stairway on the interior of the tower (Fig. 19). Once through the door archers could man a narrow rock ledge outside the tower or descend to rock-cut platforms by steps that lead through a network of caves. Each of the platforms was protected by a palisade of masonry. Natural caves are also evident along the east flank of the outcrop, where some have been converted to military uses. Tower D is the largest salient in the fortress and appears to have been repaired in places. Erosion and landslides have covered any evidence for rooms on the interior of the tower. The wall between towers D and F is a massive, tiered revetment. The lower half of the revetment is reinforced by a relieving arch in the thickness of the wall (Fig. 13). The adjacent tower F is positioned atop a pedestal of rock (Fig. 17). The sill of an embrasured window is evident at the top of F, indicating that at least the interior of the upper level was hollow. In

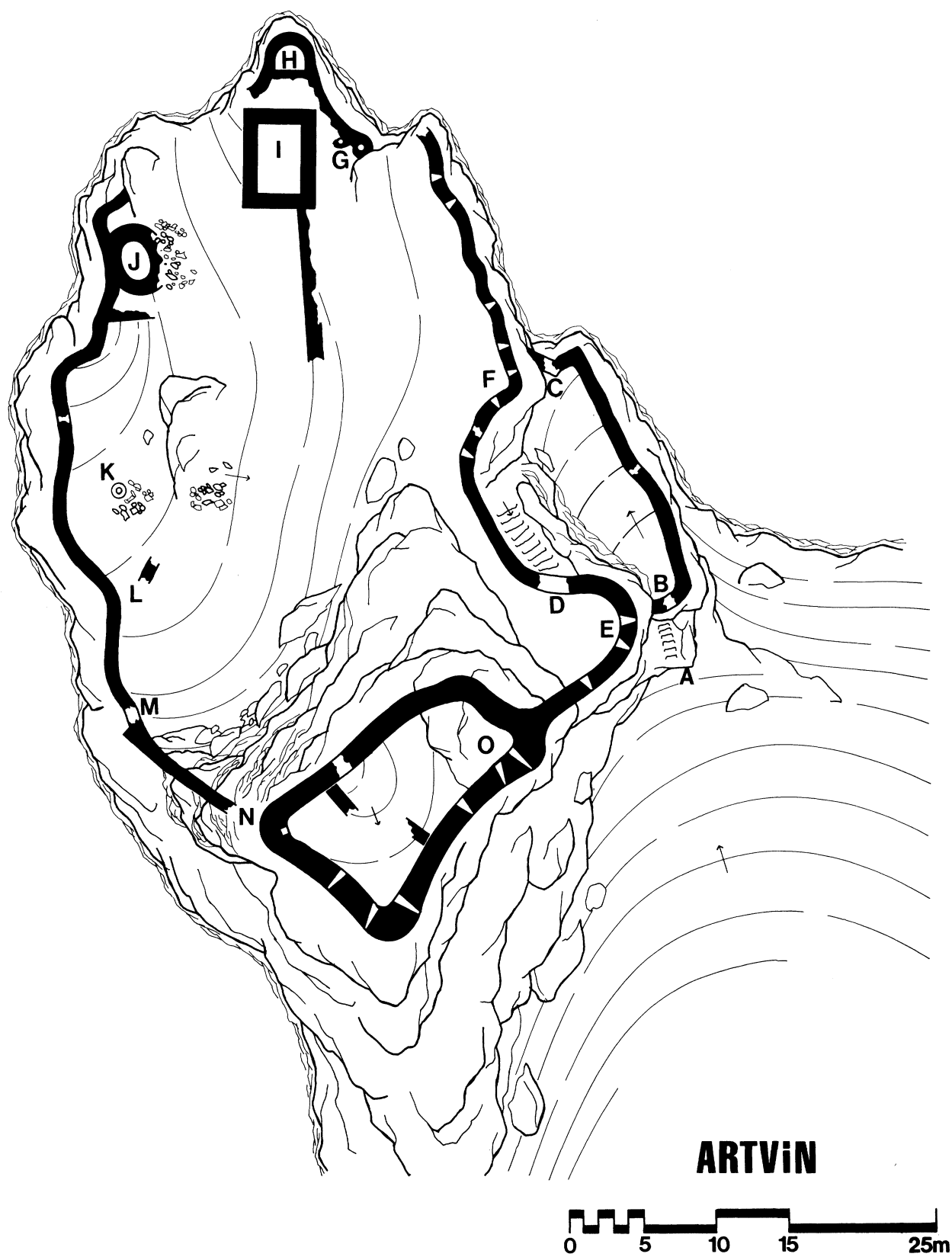
¹⁸This village appears on the Deutsche Heereskarte "Artvin," Blatt-Nr. B-XV, 1:200,000, 1943. The road just northwest of the fortress, which leads to the flank of Evardekat Dağ (also called Çadır Dağ), is not depicted accurately on this chart.

¹⁹I would like to thank Prof. Wakhtang Djobadze for the identification of this site.

²⁰Juanşer, 178, 198, as cited by Toumanoff, *Studies*, 463. Also see: Wakhoucht, *Description*, 117; and *Histoire de la Géorgie*, I, *Histoire ancienne*, trans. M. Brosset (St. Petersburg, 1849), 175.

²¹Prof. Djobadze expects to publish this material soon.

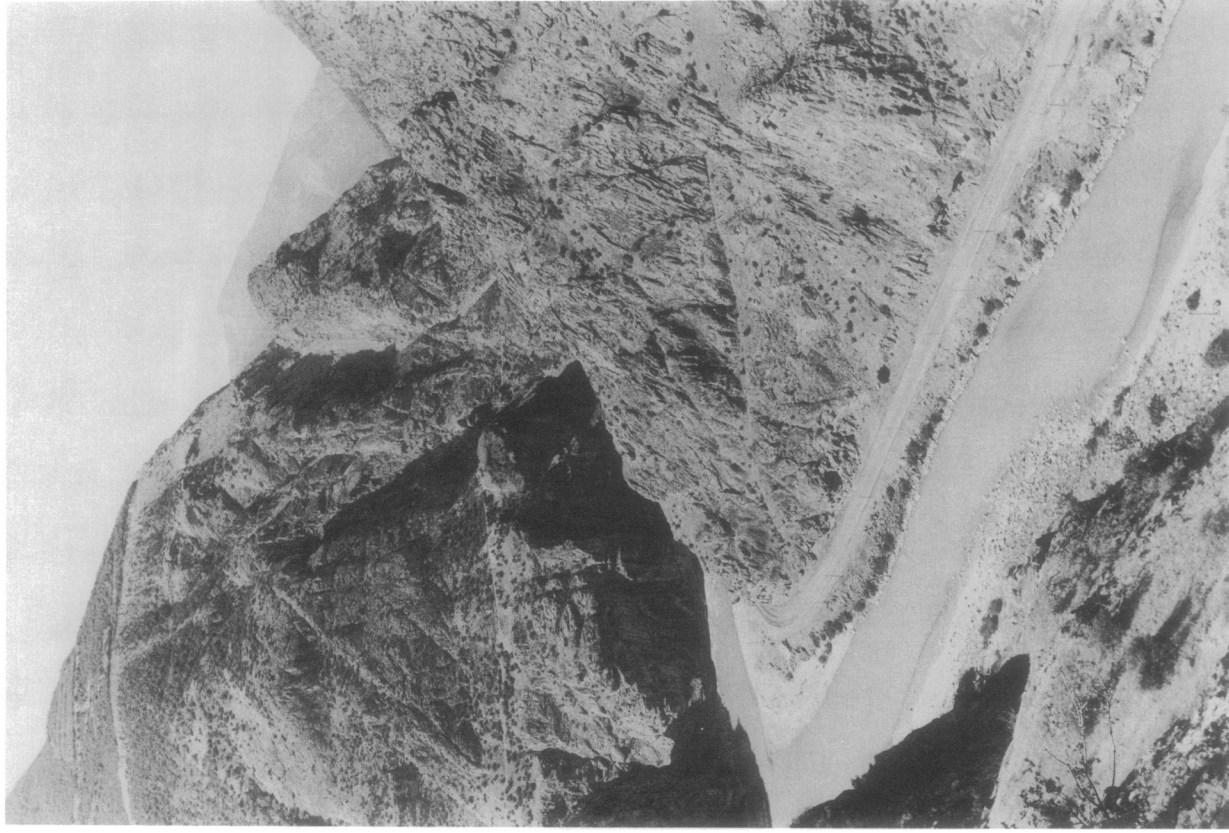
²²Koch, *Wanderungen*, II, 184 ff.



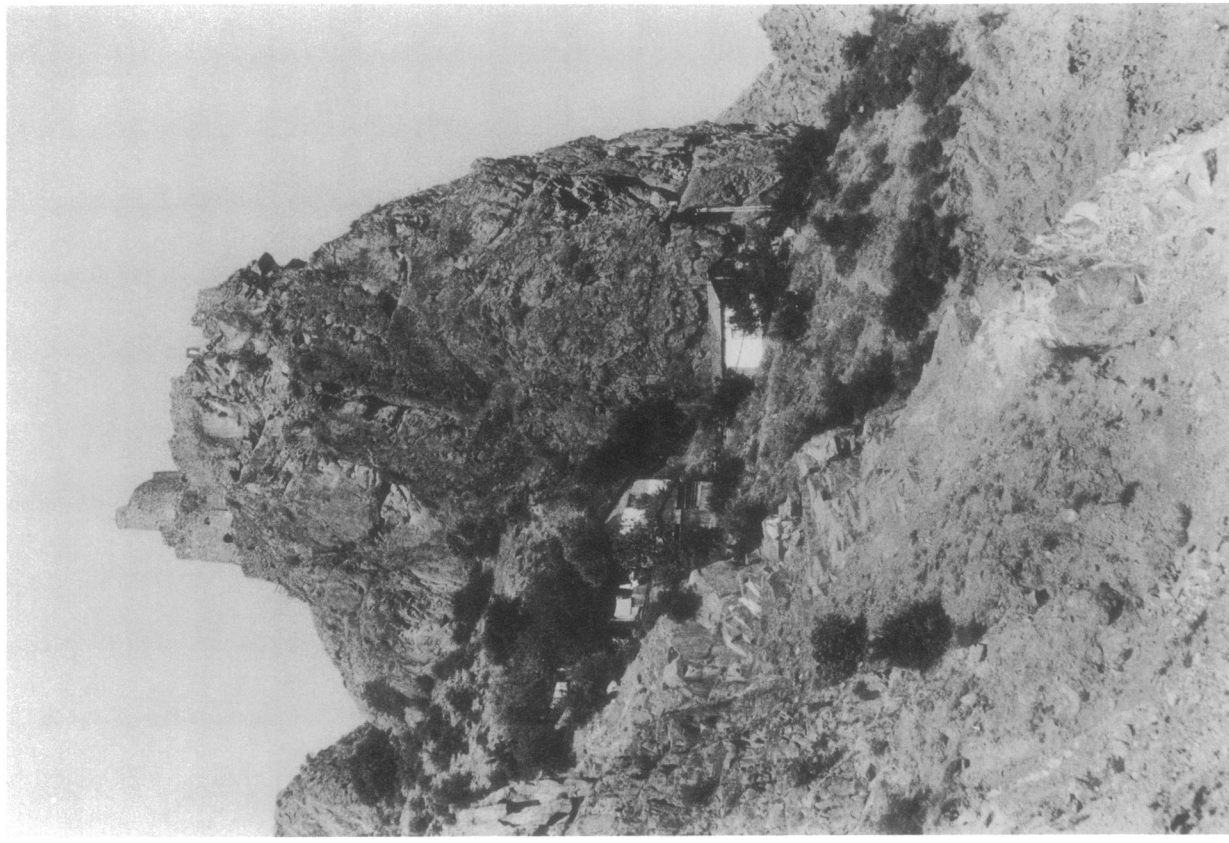
2. Turkey, Artvin Kalesi

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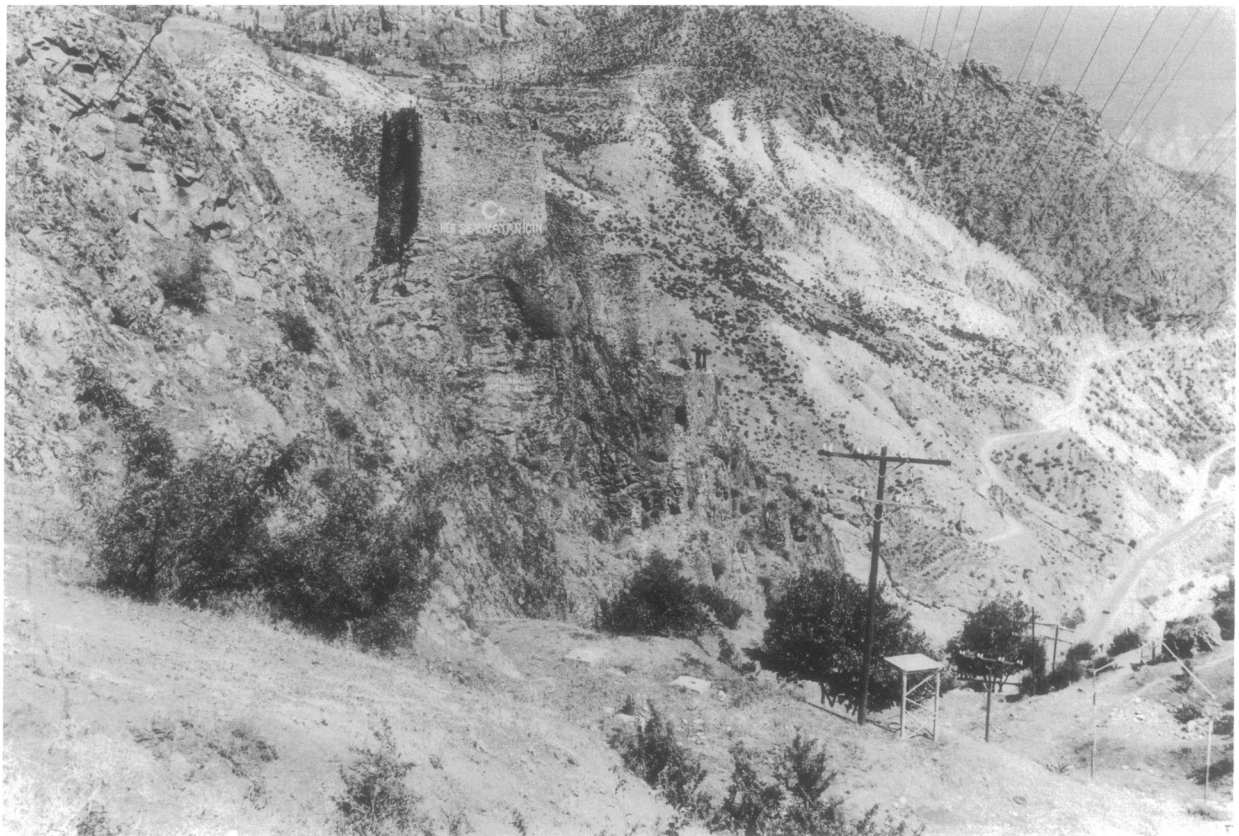




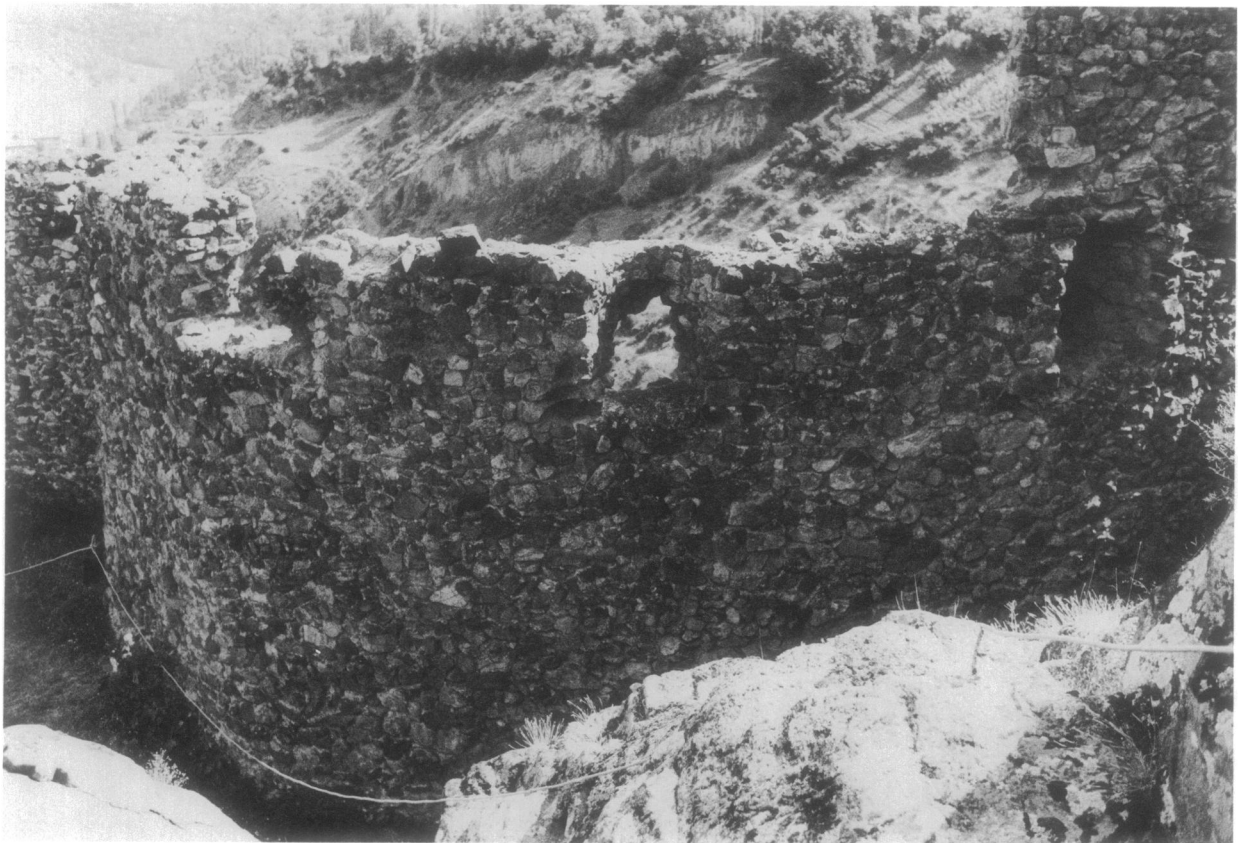
3. Artvin Kalesi, looking northwest from the fortress



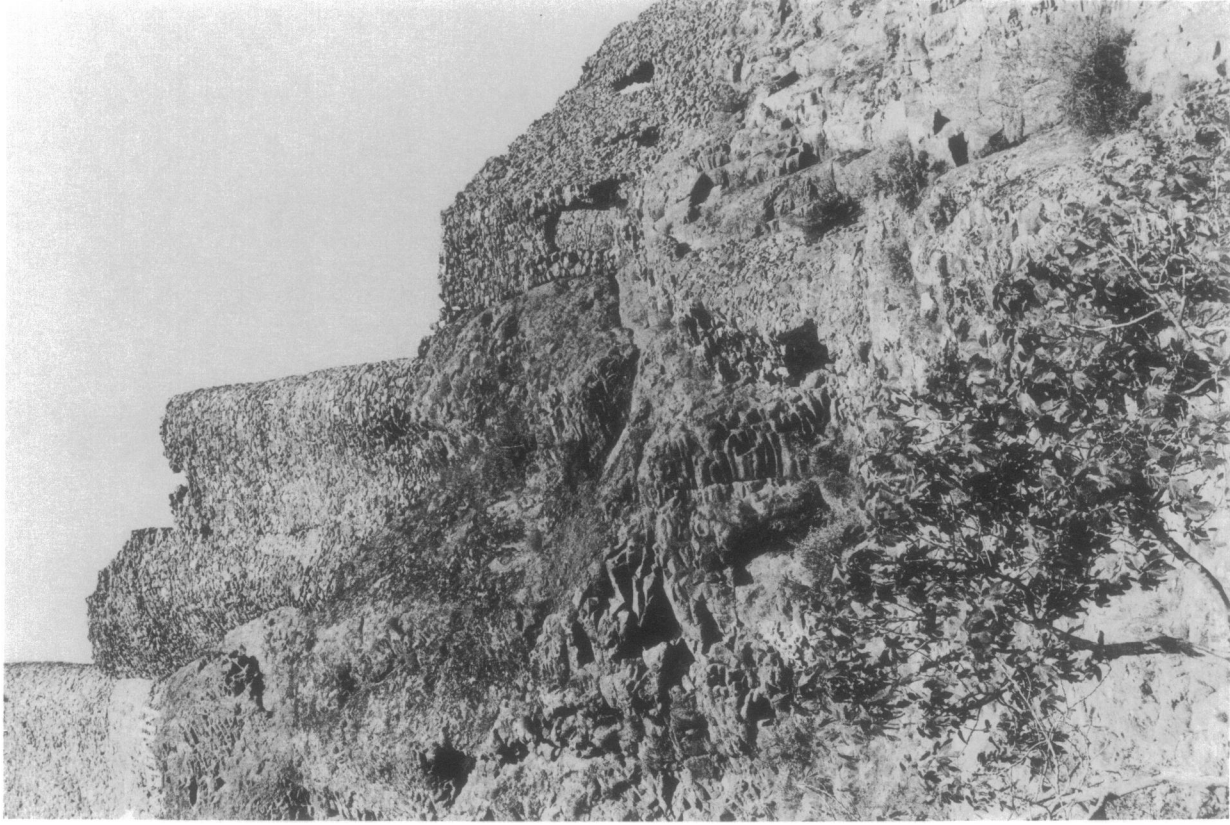
4. Artvin Kalesi, exterior, looking northwest



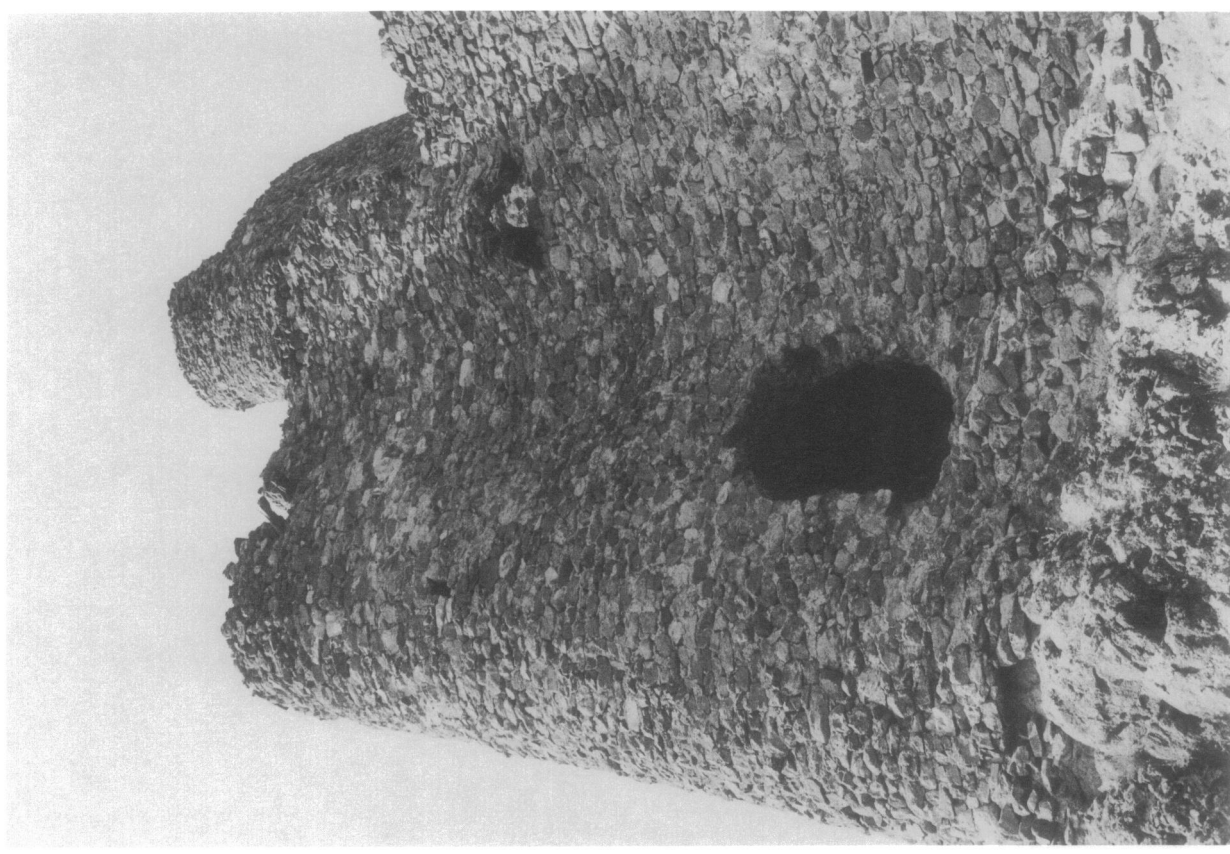
5. Artvin Kalesi, exterior, looking northeast



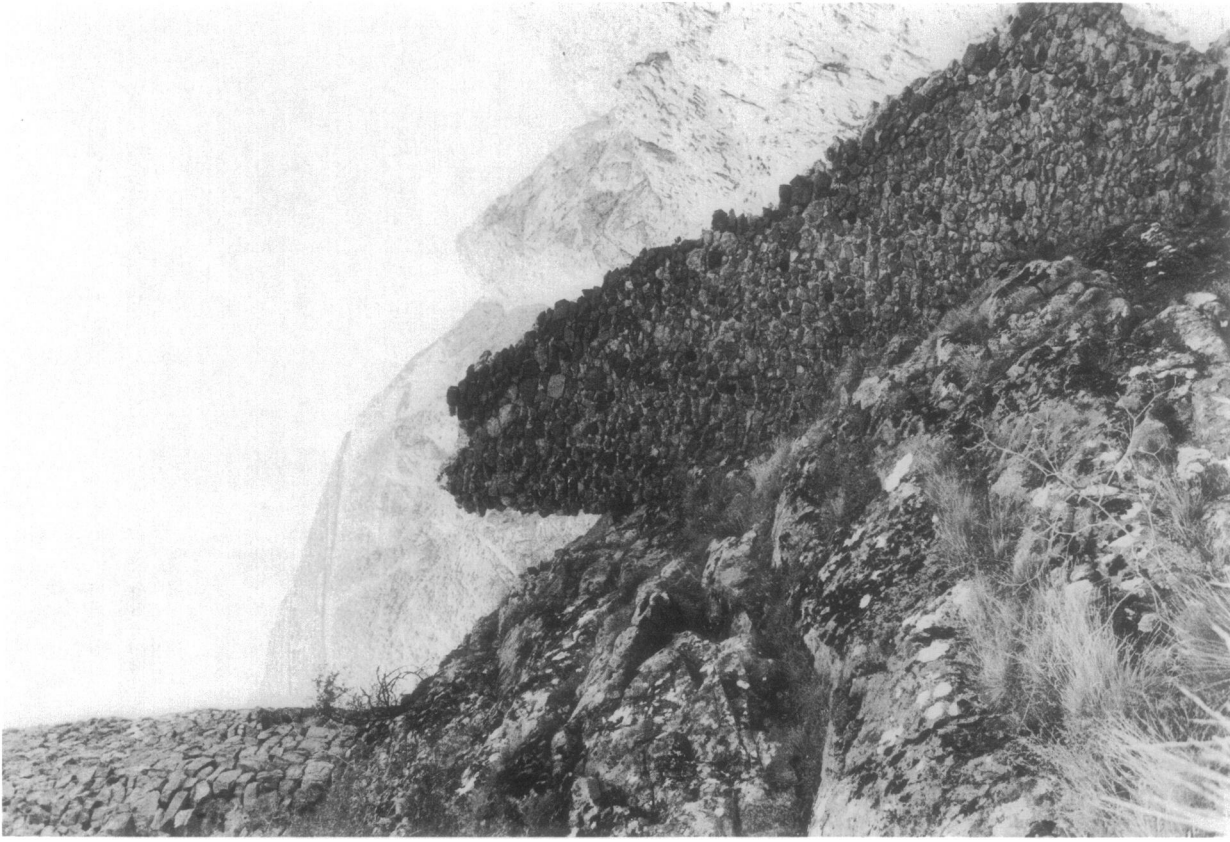
6. Artvin Kalesi, interior, looking southeast at wall between D and F



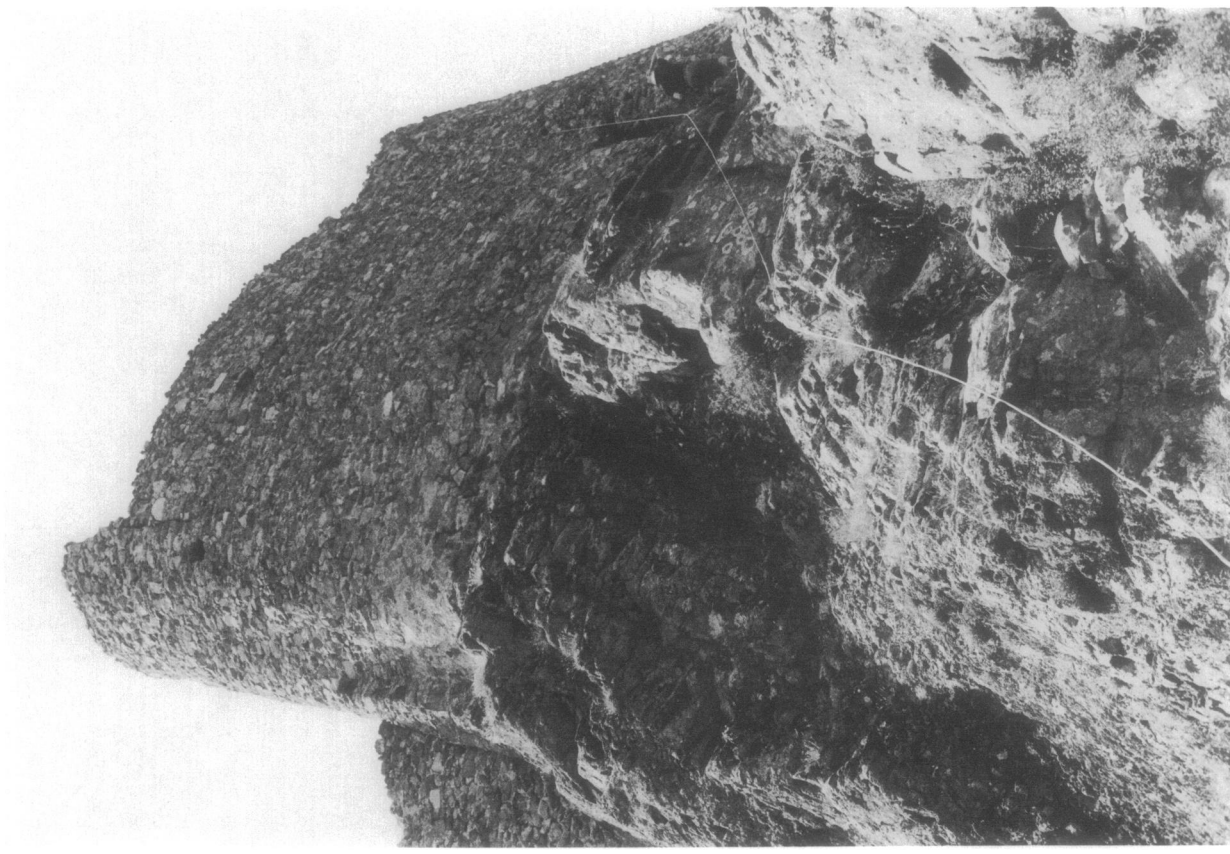
7. Artvin Kalesi, exterior, looking northeast at A and E



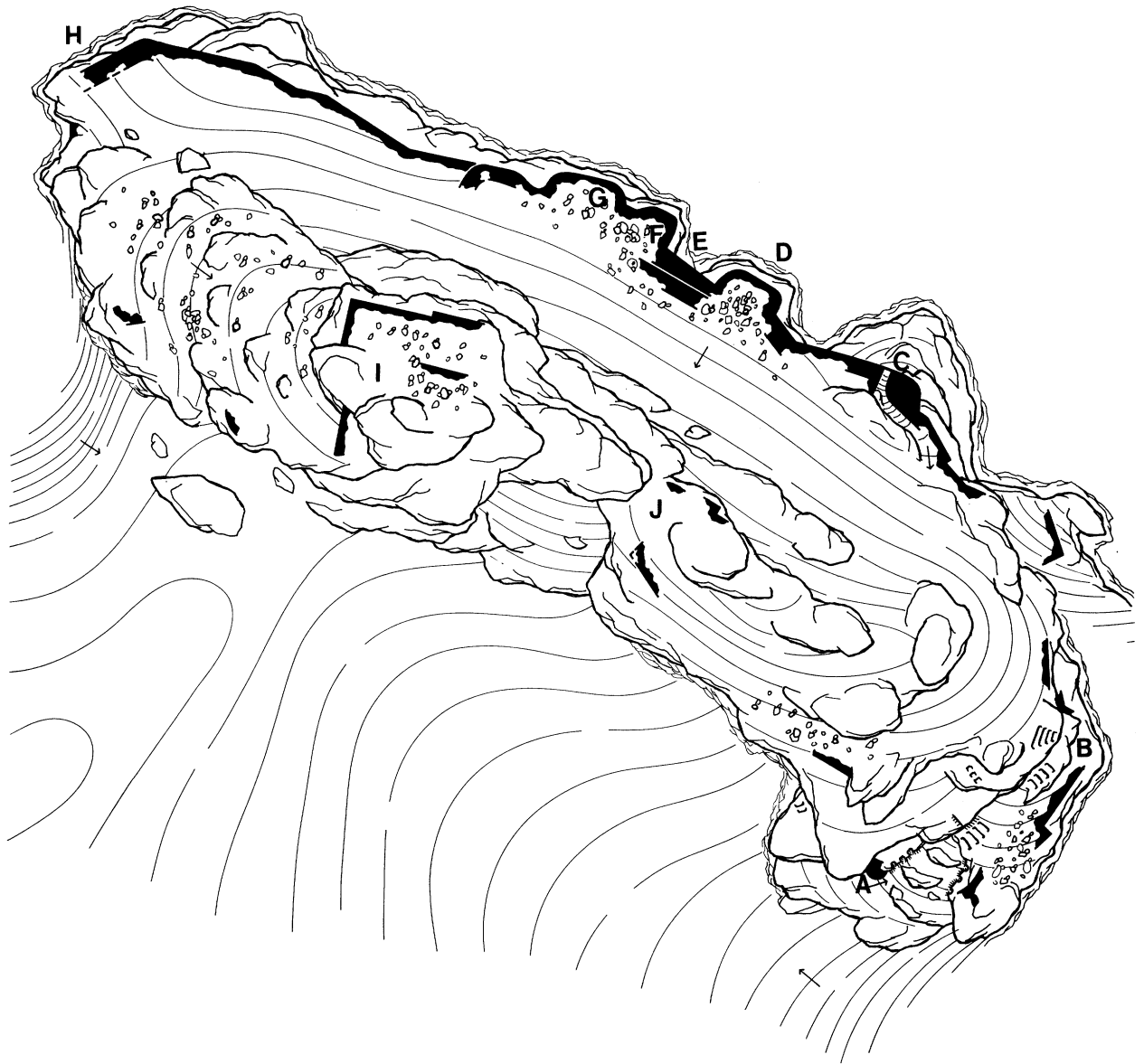
8. Artvin Kalesi, interior, looking west at D



9. Artvin Kalesi, interior, looking northwest at wall between M and N



10. Artvin Kalesi, interior, looking west at donjon O



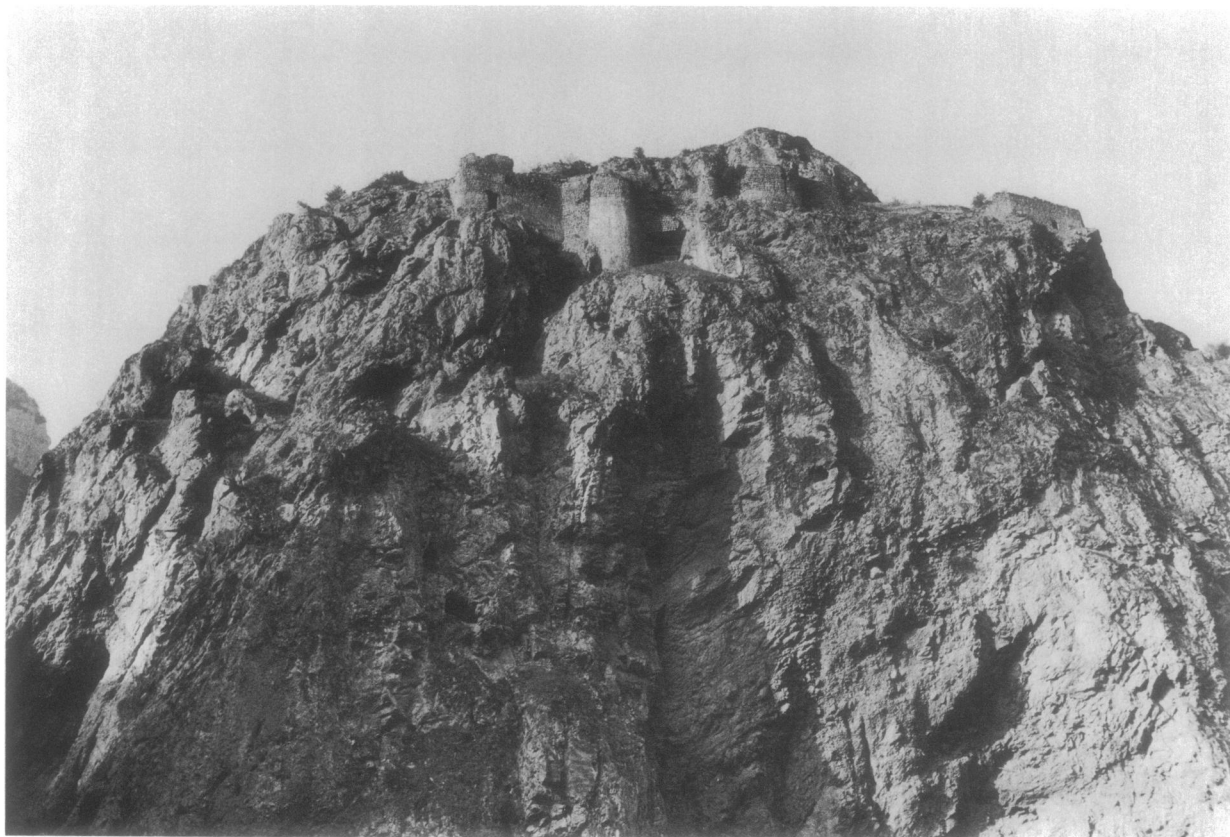
FERHATLI



11. Turkey, Ferhatlı Kalesi



12. Ferhath Kalesi, exterior, looking southwest



13. Ferhath Kalesi, exterior, looking south



14. Ferhatlı Kalesi, exterior, looking north at A



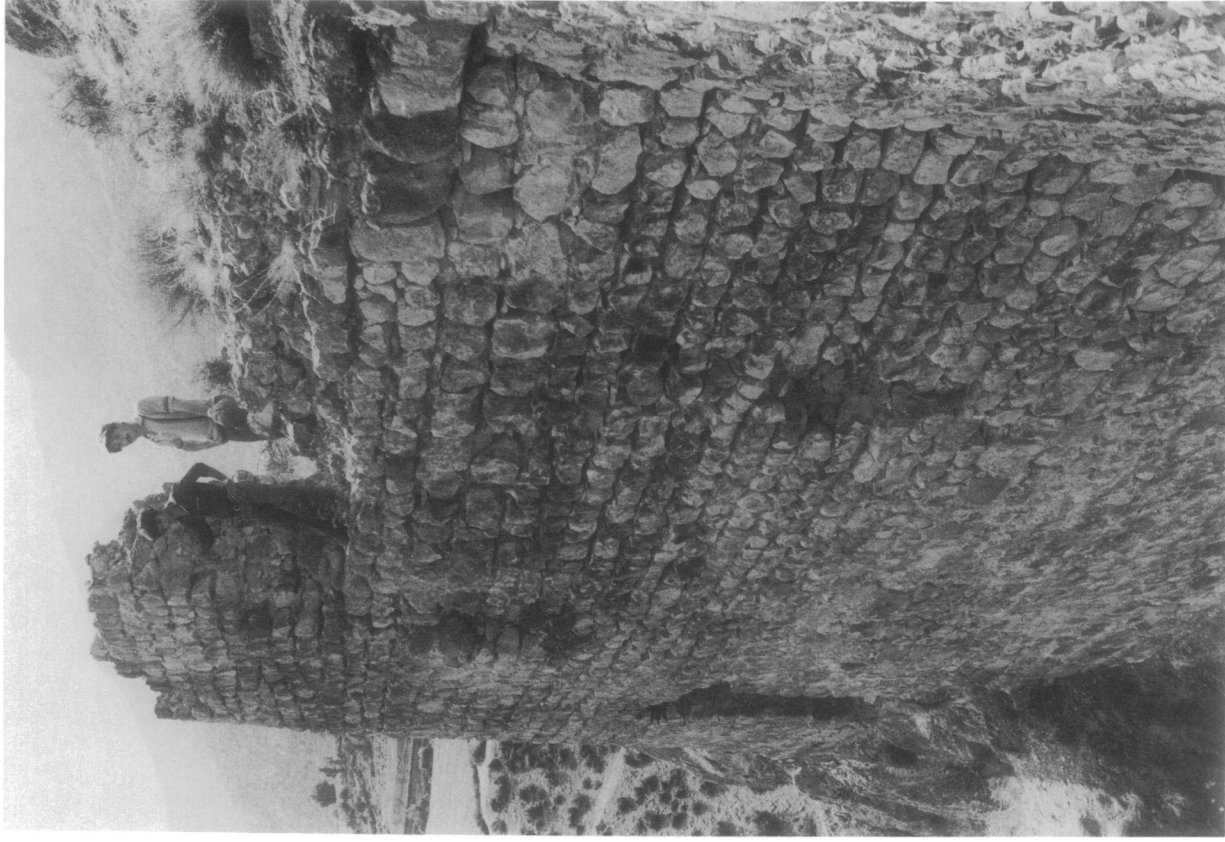
15. Ferhatlı Kalesi, exterior, looking east at G



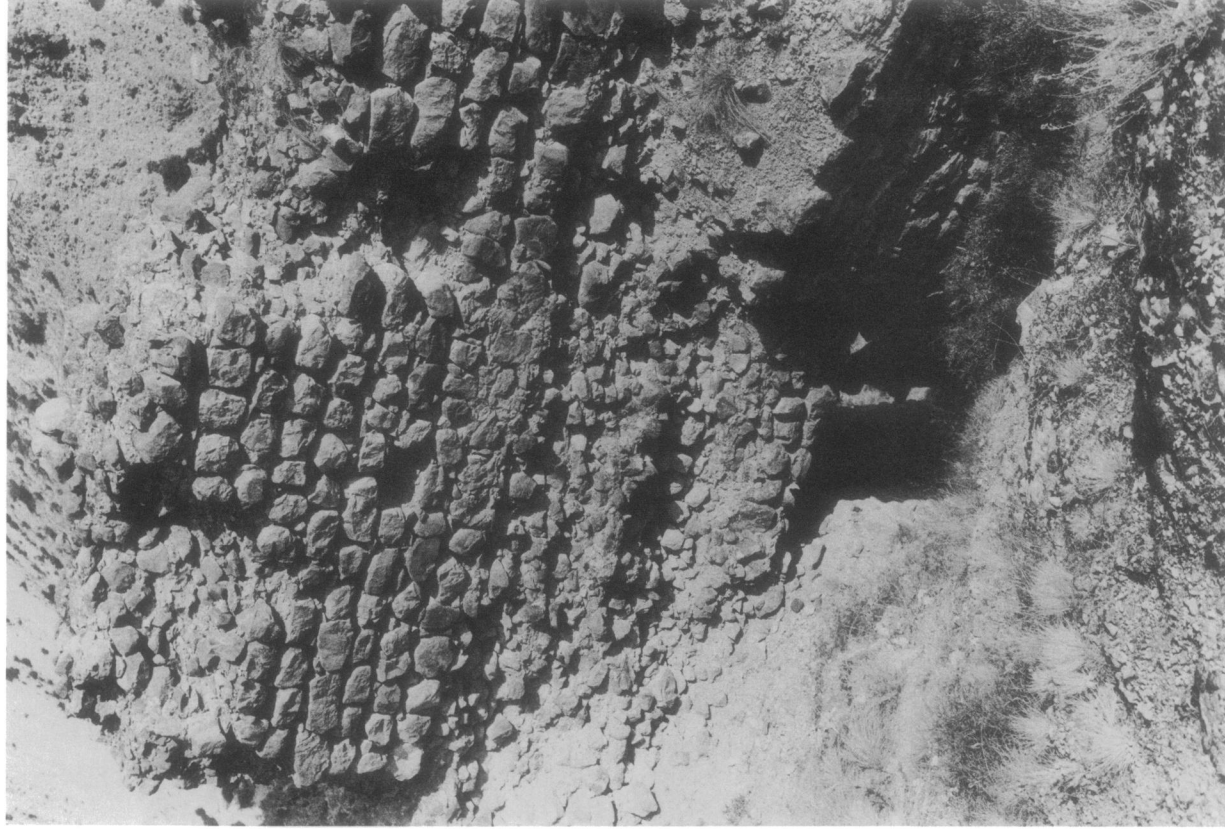
16. Ferhatlı Kalesi, looking northwest from the fortress



17. Ferhatlı Kalesi, exterior, looking northwest at F

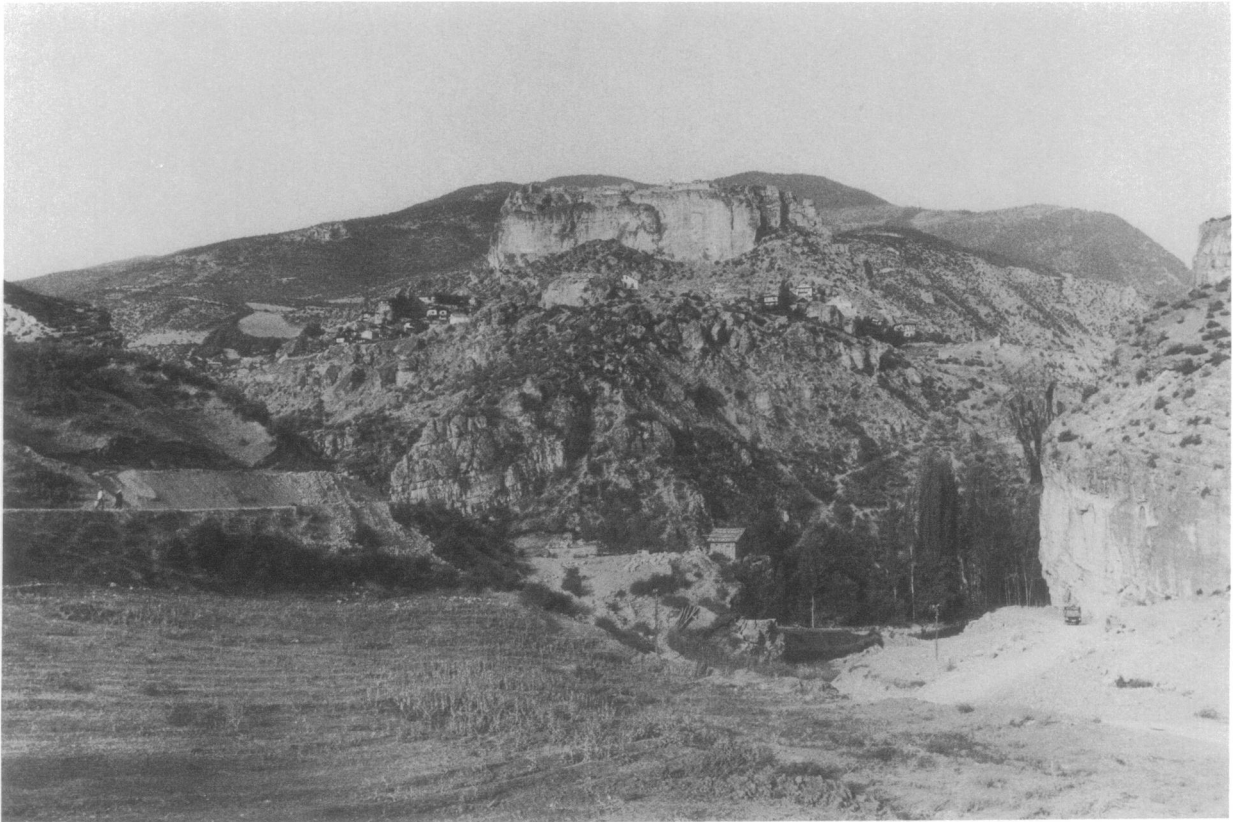


18. Ferhatlı Kalesi, exterior, looking southeast at C

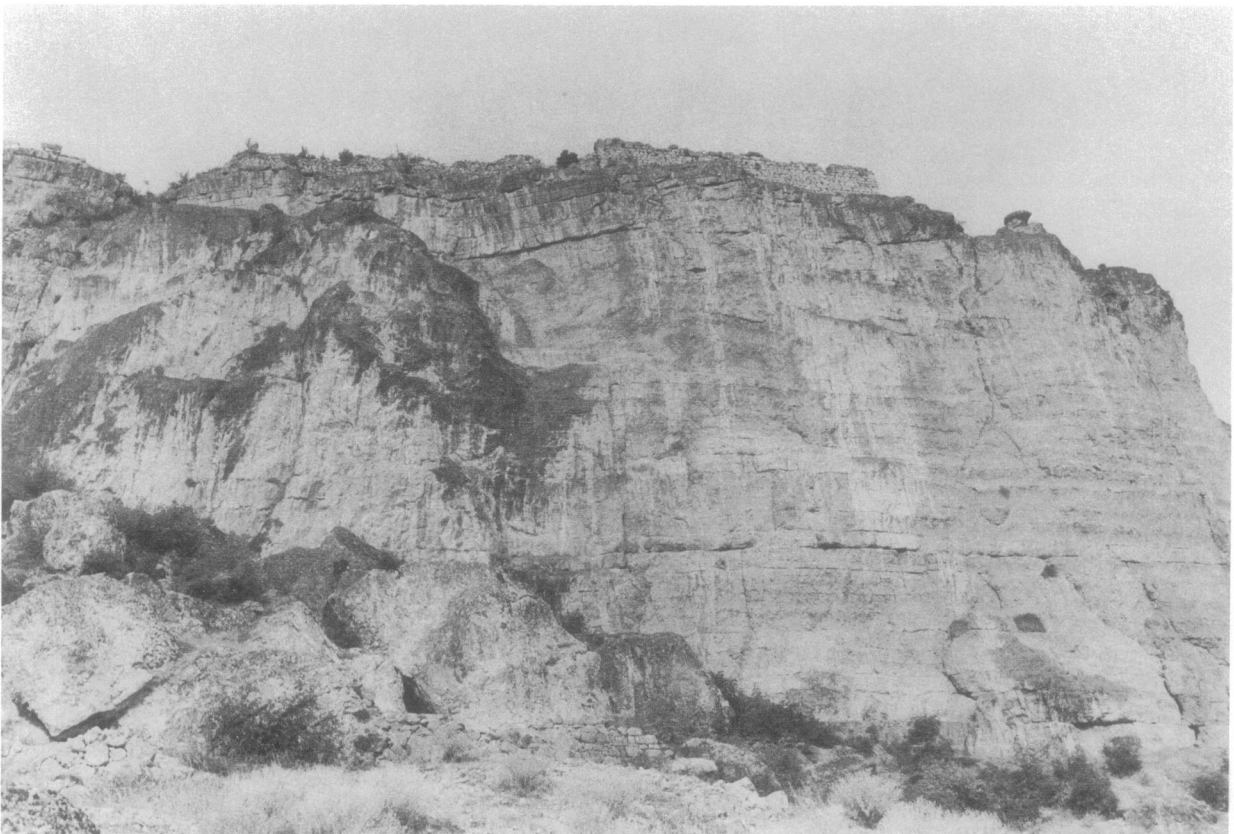


19. Ferhatlı Kalesi, interior, looking north at C





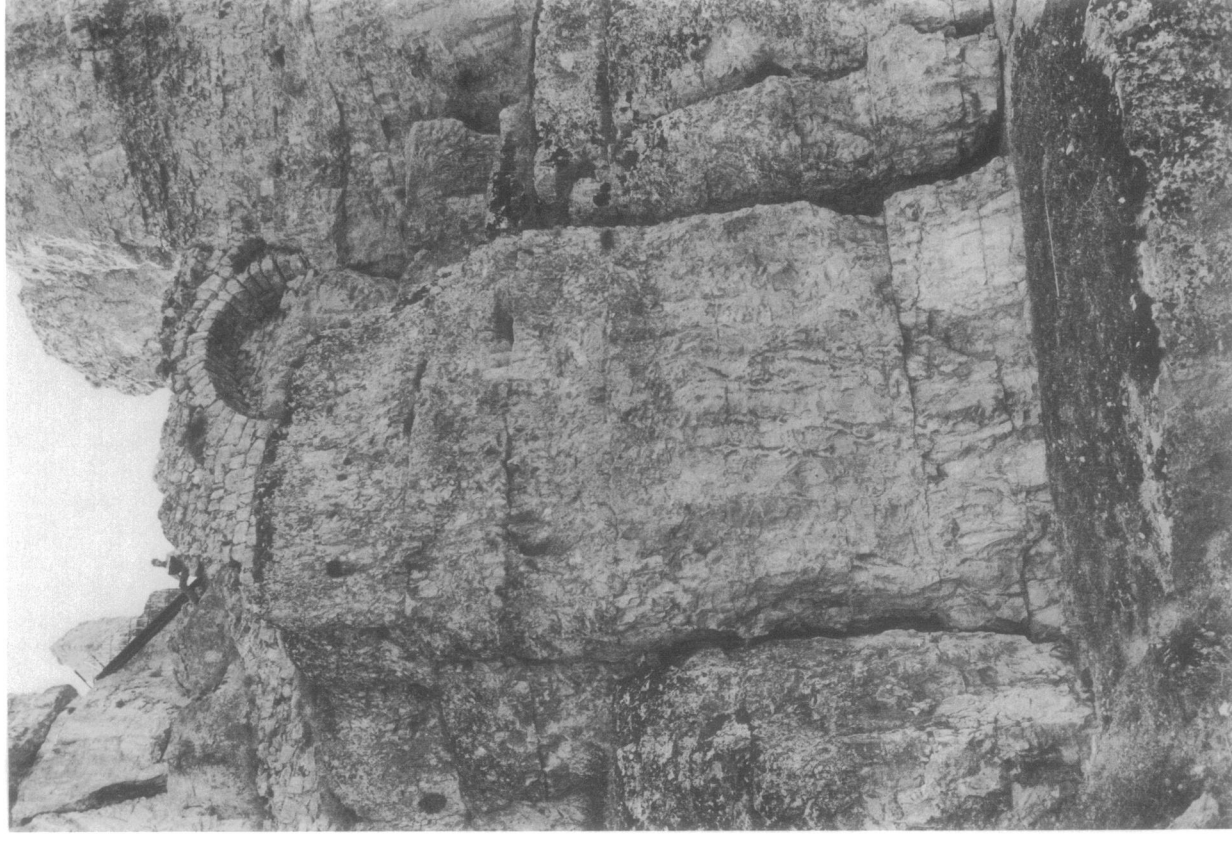
21. Ardanuç Kalesi, exterior, looking northwest



22. Ardanuç Kalesi, exterior, looking west



23. Ardauç Kalesi, exterior, looking northwest into outwork A



24. Ardauç Kalesi, exterior, looking southwest at entrance between B and C



25. Ardanuç Kalesi, looking northeast from the fortress



26. Ardanuç Kalesi, interior, looking northwest at church E (arrow)



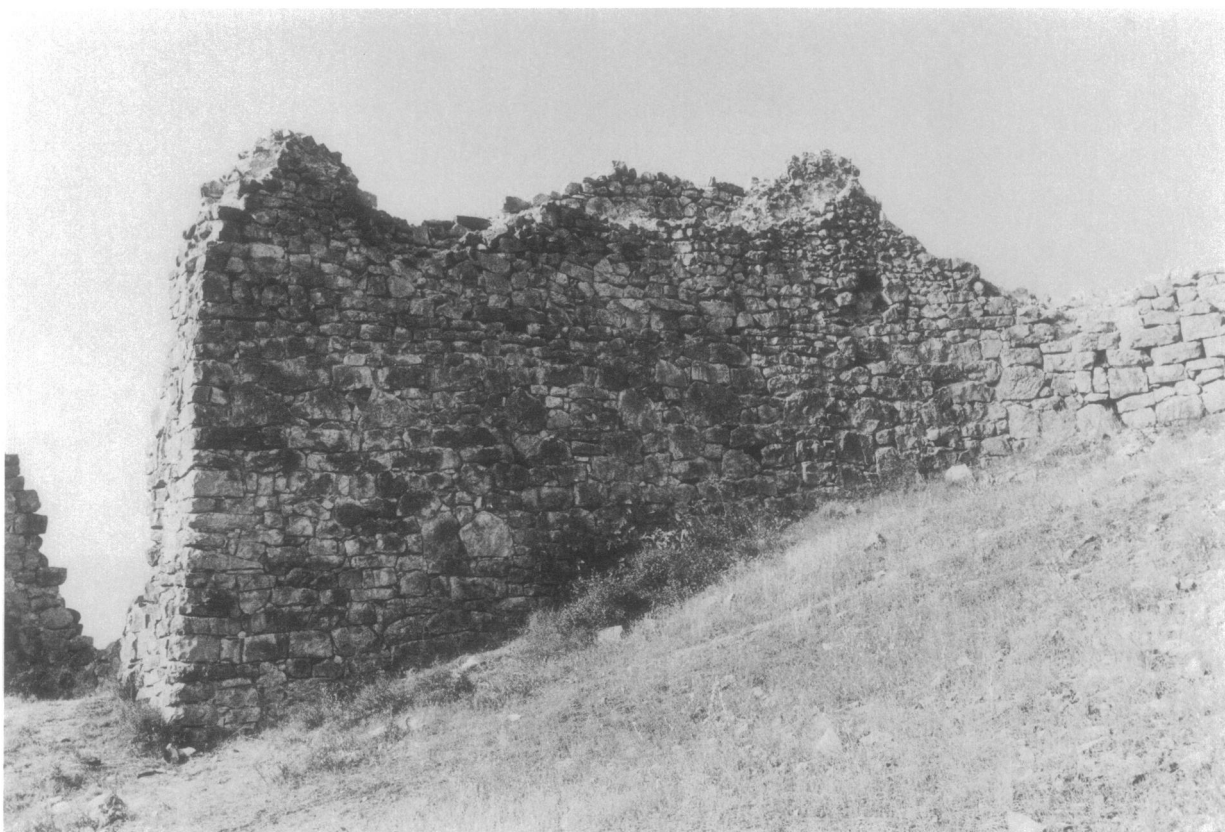
27. Ardanuç Kalesi, interior, looking southwest at the chevet of E



28. Ardanuç Kalesi, interior, looking northeast into E



29. Ardanuç Kalesi, exterior, looking southeast at the circuit from I



30. Ardanuç Kalesi, interior, looking southwest at H



ŞAVŞAT

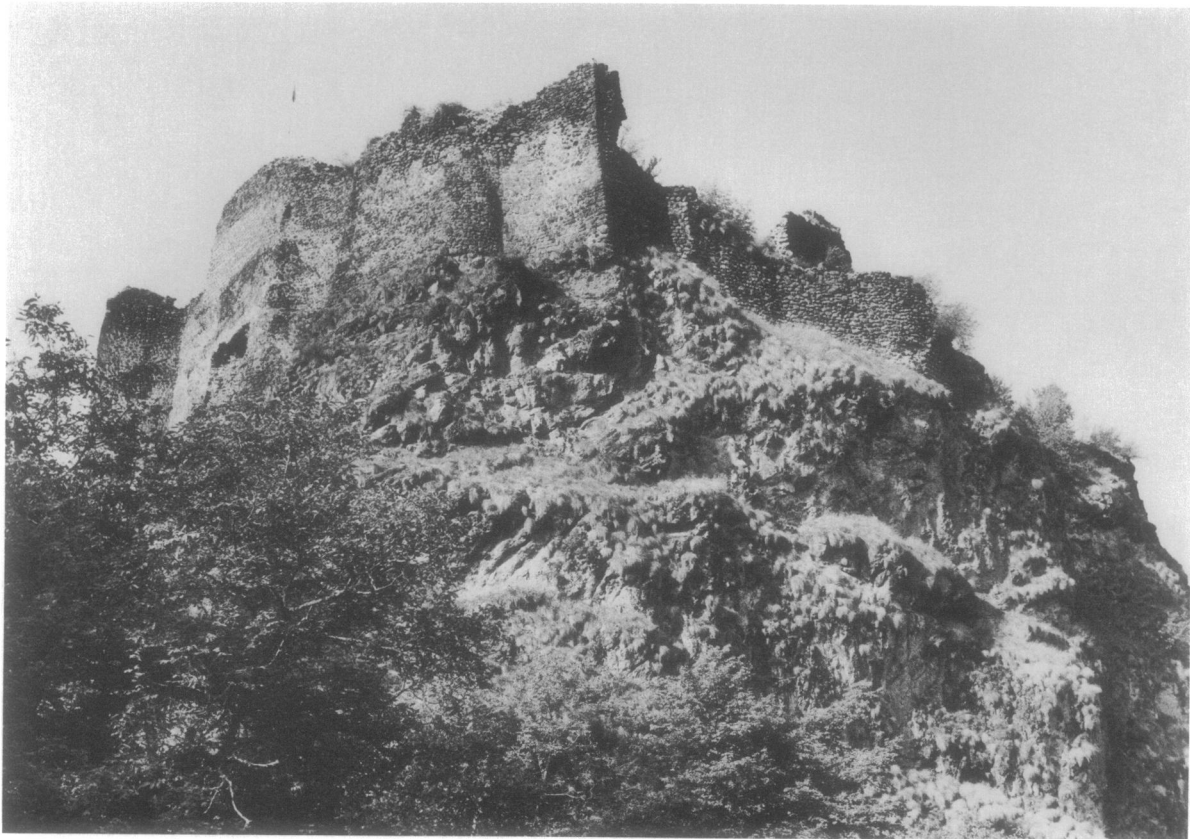


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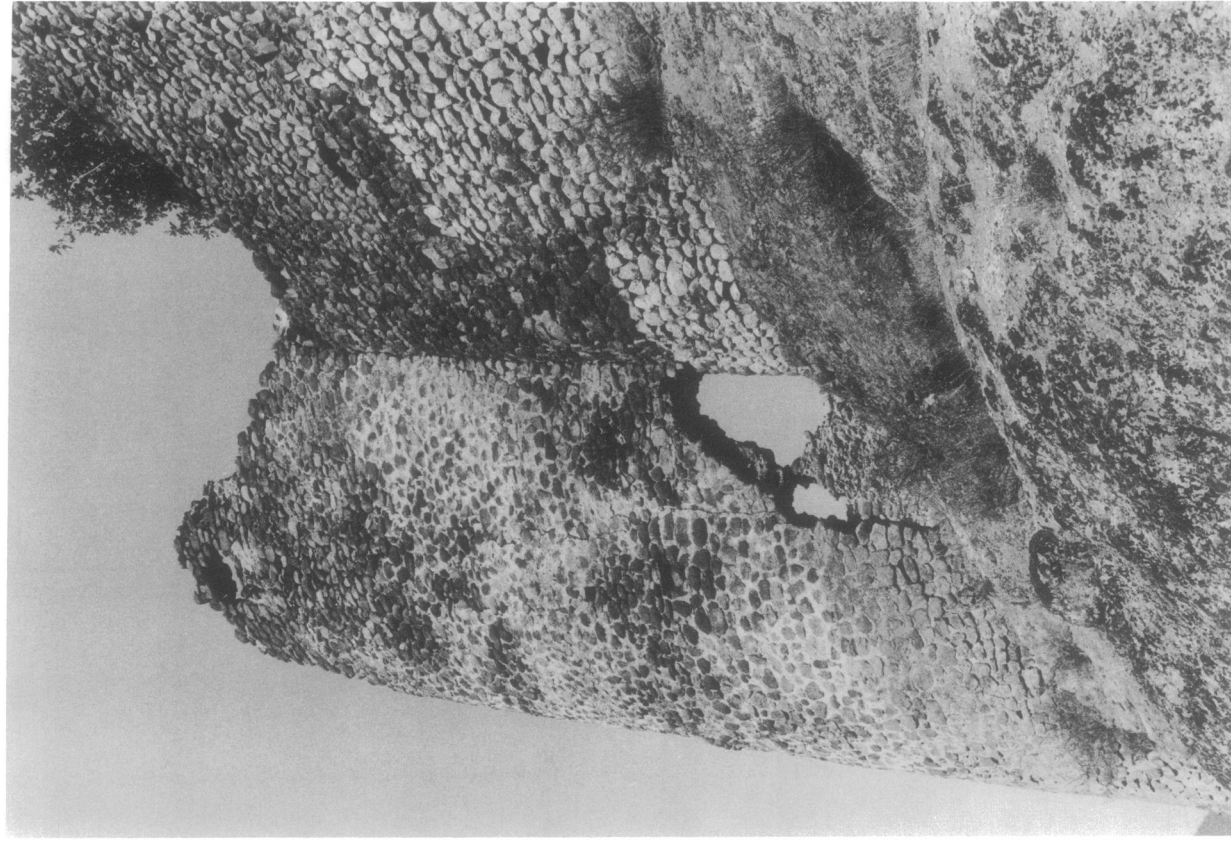
32. Şavşat Kalesi, interior, looking southwest from J to A



33. Şavşat Kalesi, exterior, looking southwest at E, F, G, and H



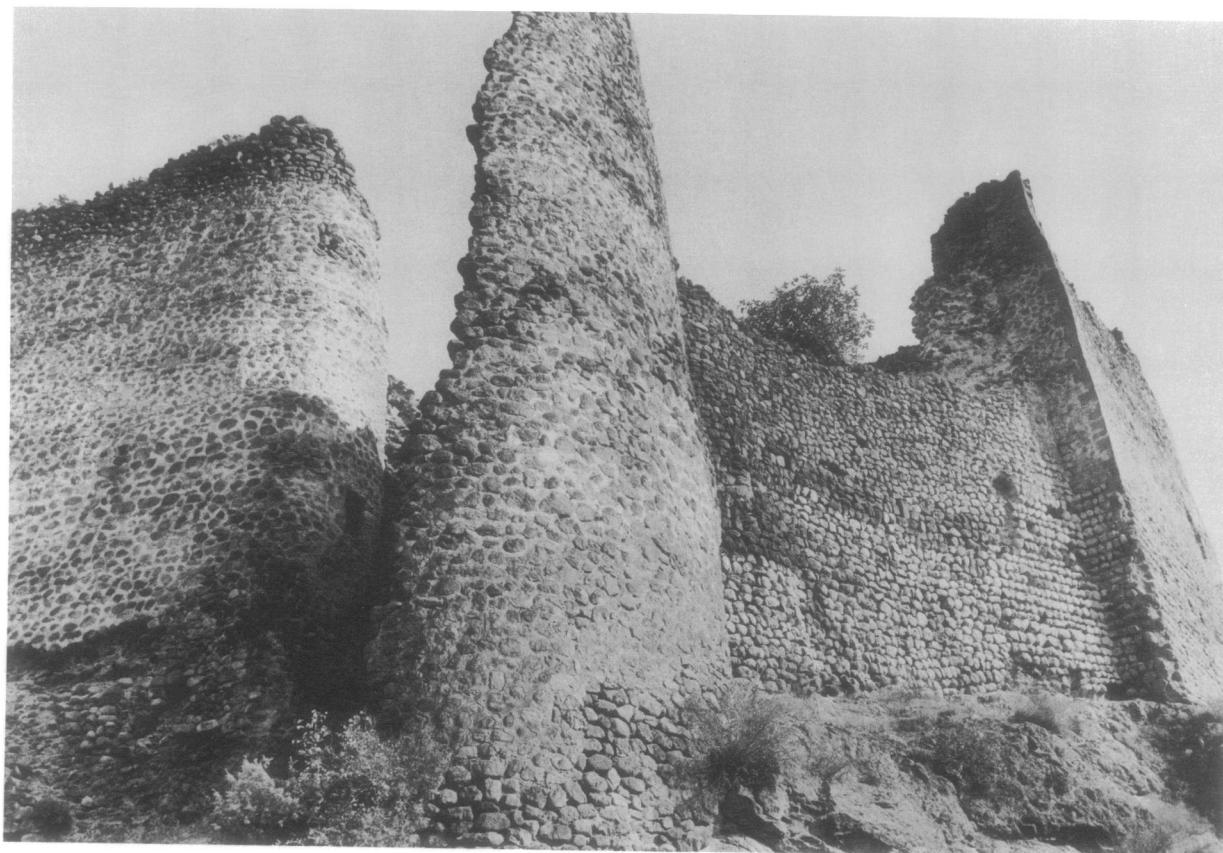
34. Şavşat Kalesi, interior, looking west at A



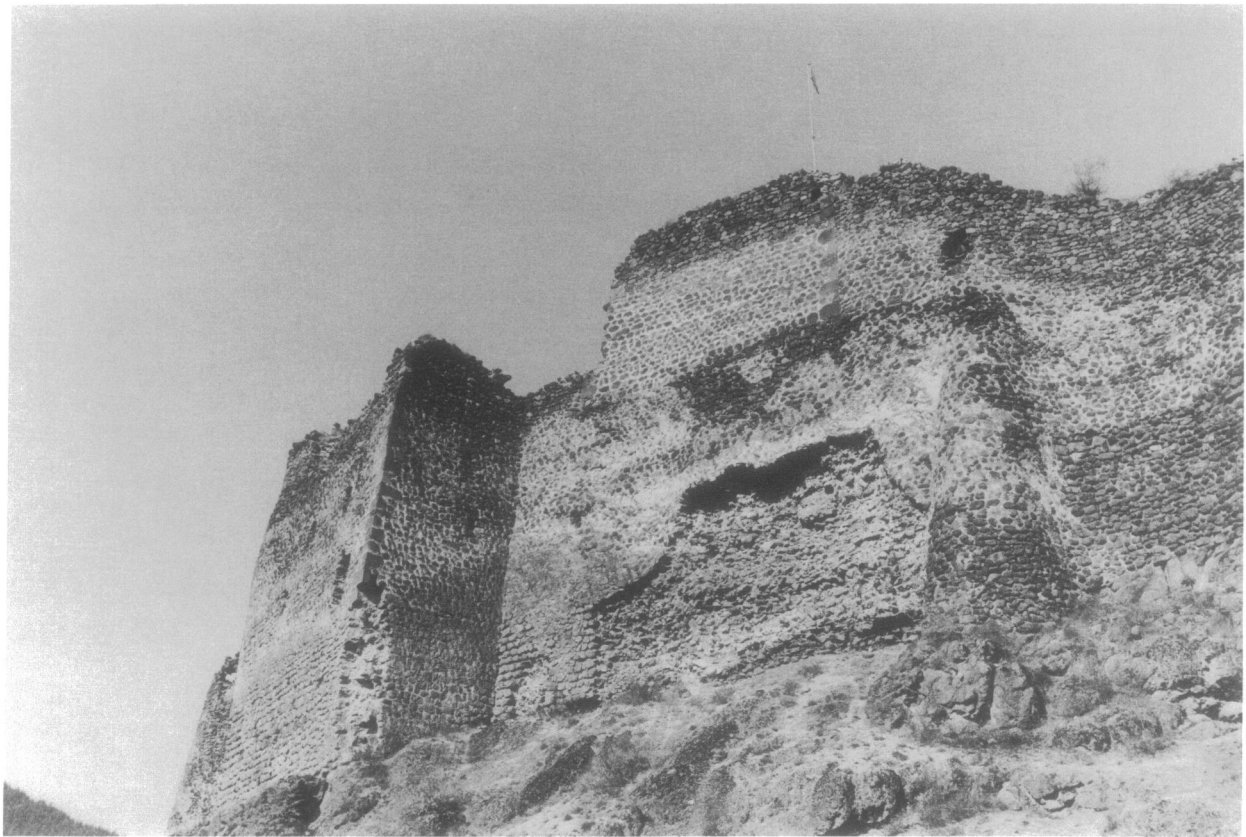
35. Şavşat Kalesi, exterior, looking west at D



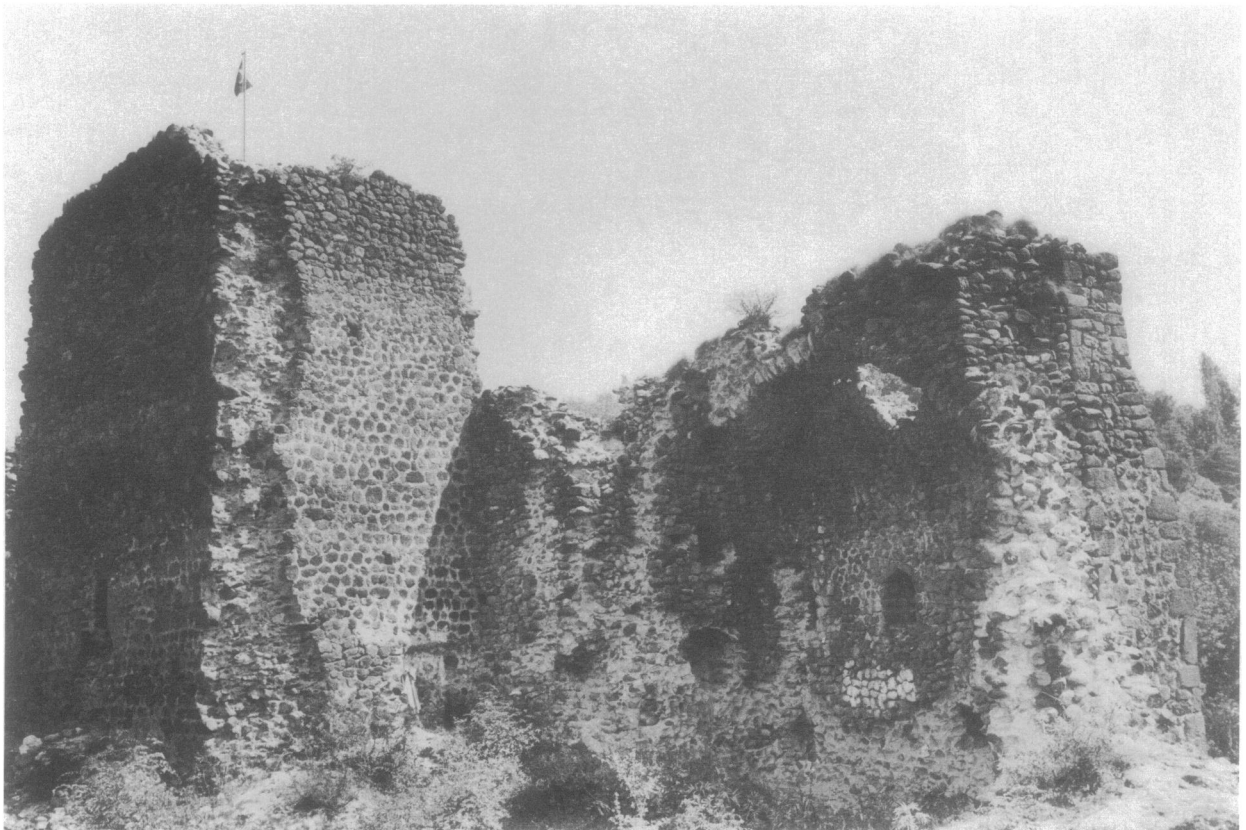
36. Şavşat Kalesi, exterior, looking northwest at A and B



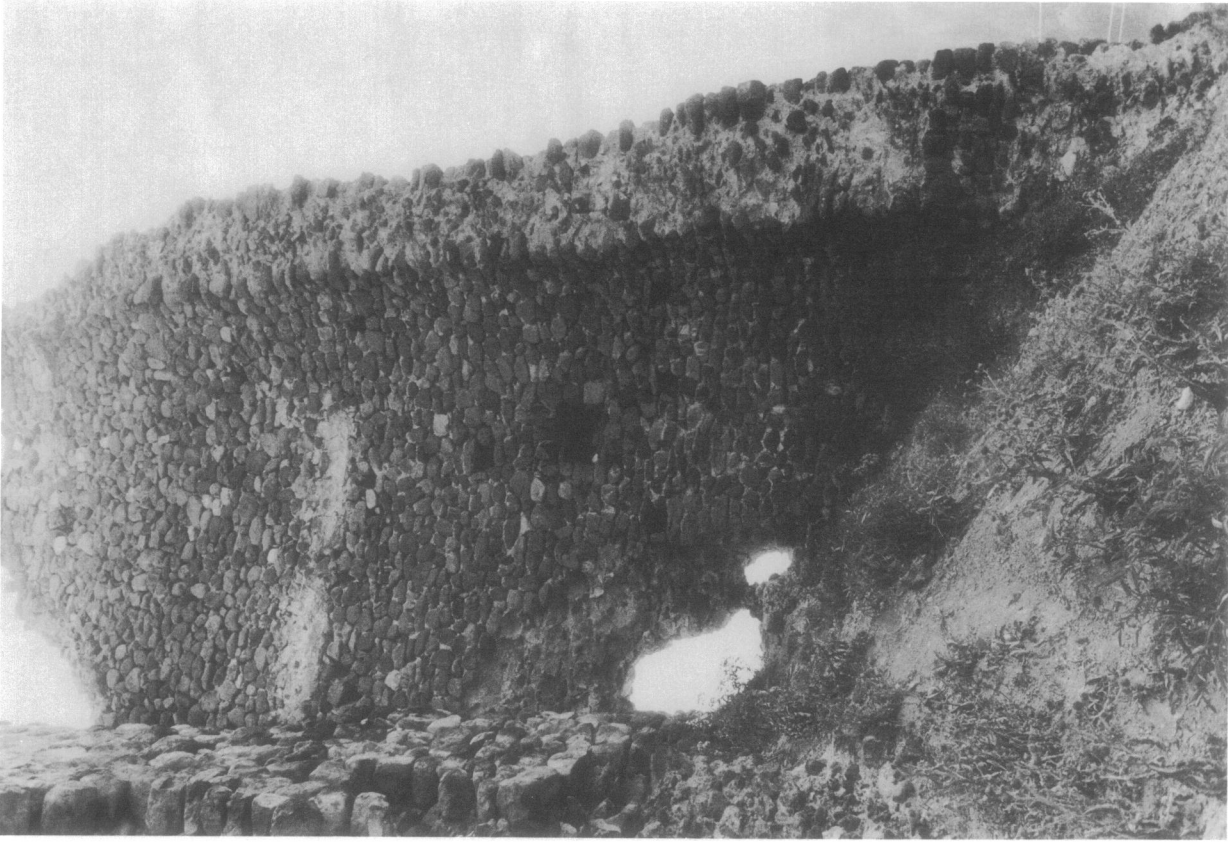
37. Şavşat Kalesi, exterior, looking north at C, D, and E



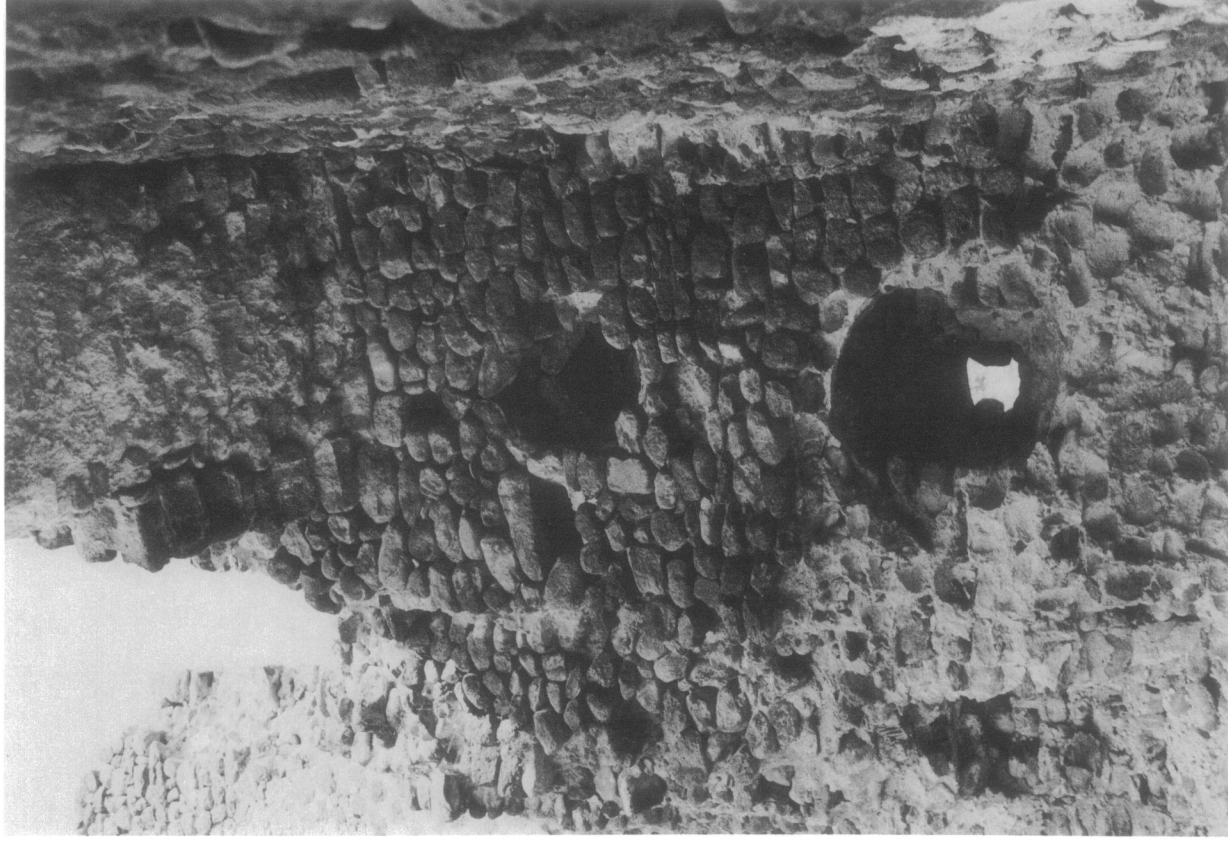
38. Şavşat Kalesi, exterior, looking southwest at E, F, and G



39. Şavşat Kalesi, interior, looking northeast at E and F



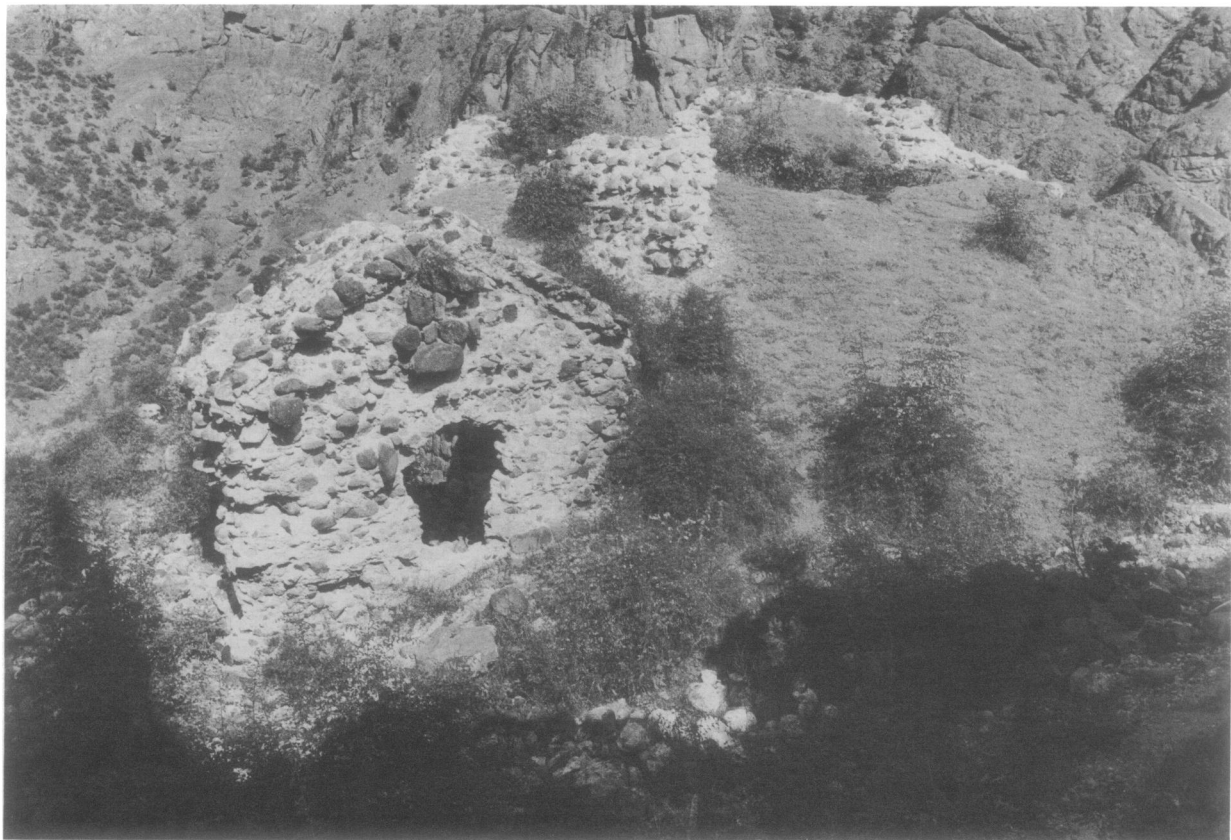
40. Şavşat Kalesi, exterior, looking east into D



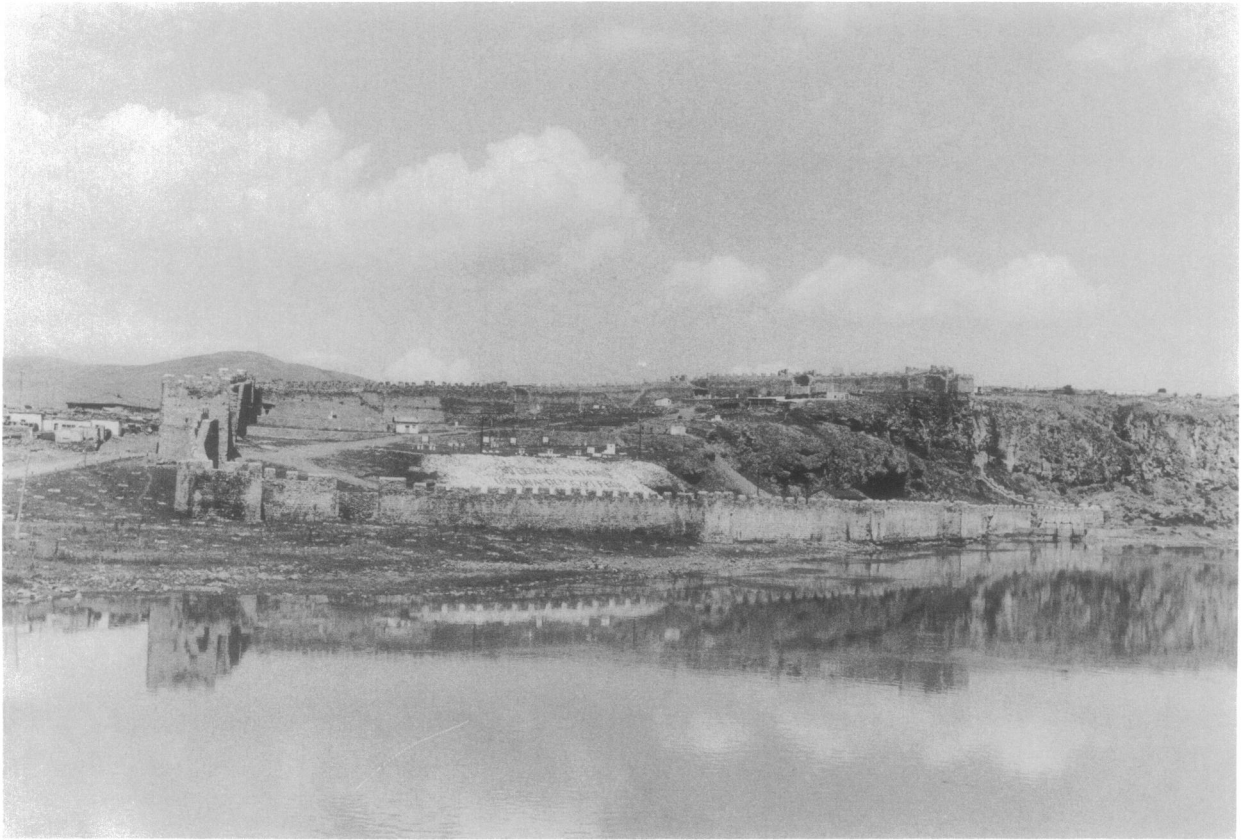
41. Şavşat Kalesi, interior, looking northeast into E



42. Şavşat Kalesi, interior, looking north at chapel K



43. Şavşat Kalesi, interior, looking northwest at the chevet of K



44. Ardahan Kalesi, exterior, looking north



45. Ardahan Kalesi, exterior, looking southeast

bastion G and the neighboring salient to the northwest (Fig. 15) there is evidence of buried embrasured loopholes (Fig. 13). The most northwesterly extension of the north facade at H appears to have a blocked low-level door which may have once given access to exterior fighting platforms. Unfortunately, little can be said about the donjon I, where damage appears to be quite extensive. Below I are the remains of a small structure at J; its function is unknown.

The architectural features of Ferhatlı Kalesi are similar to those of other Georgian forts in the province of Artvin with two exceptions. The towers of the north facade do not taper so radically. Also, the masonry is superior to that seen at most sites but is identical to a major period of reconstruction at Ardanuç Kalesi.

Ardanuç

At an altitude of 1,982 m Ardanuç Kalesi is situated atop the tilted summit of a lofty rock plateau whose vertical sides rise from the more gentle slopes above the river canyon (Fig. 21). Directly below the outcrop, on a shelf at the northeast, the village of Eski Ardanuç occupies the original site of the medieval settlement (Fig. 25). The modern town (Yeni Ardanuç) is about 3 km to the northeast; it is situated on the east bank of the Ardanuç Suyu. This river is fed by streams at the south and east, the most important of which flows through the Aravet valley on the east flank of Kale Dağ.²³ The convergence of so many watercourses has formed the narrow but especially fertile highland plain of Ardanuç. Because of the relative security in this region during the period of the modern Turkish republic, the site of the medieval town, which appears to have been densely populated in the nineteenth century,²⁴ is being slowly abandoned in favor of the accessibility (and abundant water) of the modern settlement. Today Ardanuç is a separate *kaza* in the *vilâyet* of Artvin.

The origin of the name "Ardanuç" is uncertain. İnçicean claims that the wife of a certain unspecified king was named Artanoïch or, properly, Vardanoïch.²⁵ Wakhoucht's explanation of the etymol-

ogy is somewhat convoluted in that he divides "Artanuĵi" into three syllables which individually mean "not a body [but] a treasure."²⁶

Cholarzēnē/Klarjet'i,²⁷ the district in which Ardanuç (Greek: Ardanoutzi; Latin: Adranutzium; Georgian: Artanuĵi; Armenian: Artanuš) lies, was not entirely within the ancient and traditional lands of Iberia. According to Leonti Mroveli, Pharnabazus, the semilegendary first king of Iberia, established a dukedom in the newly unified Cholarzēnē.²⁸ Strabo tells us that in the second century B.C. this district (χορζηνή) was removed from Georgian control and incorporated into one of the expanding Armenian kingdoms.²⁹ However, there is no evidence that the Armenians occupied Ardanuç.³⁰ It is said that the brother of Vardan Mamikonean found safety in one of the castles of this region (perhaps Ardanuç) following his defeat at the battle of 451.³¹ After several unsuccessful attempts by his predecessors, King Vakhtang I Gorgasal (ca. 445–510) restored all of Cholarzēnē to the Georgian realm.³² When Artavaz was appointed duke of the district the fortress of Ardanuç must have been in a damaged state, for he restored this site under royal patronage as his provincial capital.³³ It is not until the early ninth century that Ašot I (the Great), the son of Adarnase I, makes this one of the principal centers of the Iberian Bagratids.³⁴ According to Smbat Davit'isje, Ašot repaired and enlarged the fortress of Vakhtang, which had been destroyed by "Qru of Baghdad," and he built the city below.³⁵ Smbat adds that Ašot

note 4], 128 [trans.]), Ardanuç was rebuilt as a residence for the wife of Ašot I.

²⁶ Wakhoucht, *Description*, 74; cf. Yovhannēsean, *Hayasdani*, 596 f.

²⁷ Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, 354.

²⁸ Leonti Mroveli, 24, as cited by Toumanoff, *Studies*, 446; see also 447 ff.

²⁹ Strabo, 11.14.5. In the mid-2nd century A.D. Ptolemy (*Geog.*, ed. K. Müller, I.2 [Paris, 1901], 927) places the town of Artanissa among the settlements of Iberia. It is possible that this site is the ancient Ardanuç; see W. Tomaschek, "Artanissa," *RE* 2 (1896), 1305 f.

³⁰ Eremyan (*Hayastanə*, 59) states that western Gugark', in which Ardanuç was included, was under Armenian influence until 387. See Toumanoff, *Studies*, 187.

³¹ Yovhannēsean, *Hayasdani*, 598 note 4.

³² Juanšer, 177, as cited by Toumanoff, *Studies*, 462; see also 362–78.

³³ *Ibid.*, 462 f. Wakhoucht (*Description*, 117) claims that the fortress was founded by Gorgasal. See also *Histoire de la Géorgie*, I, 263; and K. Salia, "La Tao-Klardjetie et ses monastères II," *Bedi Kartlisa* 13–14 (1962), 41.

³⁴ The names of the lords of Ardanuç as well as minor events in the castle's history can be found in *Histoire de la Géorgie*, I, 262, 271 f, 274, 282 ff, 302, 312, 320–22.

³⁵ Smbat Davit'isje, 343–44, as cited by Toumanoff, *Studies*, 486 note 215. The "Qru" is probably Marwān ibn Muhammad;

²³ On the Deutsche Heereskarte ("Artvin," Blatt-Nr. B-XV, 1:200,000, 1943) the mountain on which the fortress is located also bears the name Barchet Dağ. The fortress is called Adakale.

²⁴ A 19th-century etching of the town was recently republished in M. Yovhannēsean, *Hayasdani Berderə* (Venice, 1970), 597. Cf. Figs. 21 and 25 in my text.

²⁵ Brosset, "Description de l'ancienne Géorgie," 468; and Koch, *Wanderungen*, II, 194. According to Georgi Merčul' (*Žitie* [above,

erected in the fortress a church dedicated to the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul and placed therein his sepulcher.³⁶ The Arabs, who removed Ašot from the Principate of Iberia before his death in 830, permitted his sons to attain their majority in the castle of Ardanuĉ and to divide their father's titles and lands.³⁷ Adarnase II, the eldest son of Ašot, resided at Ardanuĉ, as did his son Smbat I and the latter's descendants.³⁸ The castle became so closely identified with the region of Klarjet'i that the heirs of Smbat I were also called the rulers of Ardanuĉ.³⁹ Constantine Porphyrogenitus says that the settlement of Ardanuĉ is similar to a provincial city (χωρόπολιν) and that its location on a pivotal trade route between Trebizond, Iberia, Armenia, and Syria brings in enormous revenues.⁴⁰

From the beginning of the Turkish invasions through the fourteenth century the history of Ardanuĉ Kalesi is somewhat obscure.⁴¹ In the late

ibid., 351, esp. note 48. Cf. Yovhannēsean, *Hayasdani*, 598–99; and Artvin, 1973 *İl Yılığ*, Cumhuriyetin 50 Yılında (Ankara, 1973), 20. See also Peeters, *Histoires* (above, note 4), 278 f.

³⁶Wakhoucht (*Description*, 117) mentions that this church had a beautiful, well-built cupola and once functioned as part of a monastery. See also *Histoire de la Géorgie*, I, 264.

³⁷Smbat Davit'sije, 345–46, as cited by Toumanoff, *Studies*, 488 note 228.

³⁸Ibid., 491; and S. Runciman, *The Emperor Romanus Lecapenus and His Reign* (Cambridge, 1929), 168 f.

³⁹This arrangement may have changed early in the 11th century (1011) when Bagrat III rather ruthlessly annexed Klarjet'i to his united kingdom of Georgia; cf. Honigmann, *Ostgrenze*, 159 note 2. See also Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De Administrando Imperio*, ed. and trans. G. Moravcsik and R. Jenkins, DOT I (Washington, D.C., 1967), 214–22; and C. Toumanoff, *Manuel de généalogie et de chronologie pour l'histoire de la Caucase chrétienne* (Rome, 1976), 119 f.

In 1046 King Bagrat IV (1027–72) convened a synod at Ardanuĉ with the ultimate intention of unifying the Georgian and Armenian churches. See M. Tarchnišvili, "Das Verhältnis von Kirche und Stadt im Königreich Georgien," *OC* 39 (1955), 90.

⁴⁰*De Administrando*, 216; Yovhannēsean, *Hayasdani*, 598; and H. Manandian, *The Trade and Cities of Armenia in Relation to Ancient World Trade*, trans. N. Garsoïan (Lisbon, 1965), 145 f, 155. The importance of Ardanuĉ in international trade appears to be brief. The Marchlands played no significant role in Arab commerce; see A. Sprenger, *Die Post- und Reiserouten des Orients* (Leipzig, 1864), 57–62; and B. Martin-Hisard, "Du T'ao-K'lardzheti à l'Athos: Moines géorgiens et réalités sociopolitiques," *Bedi Kartlisa* 41 (1983), 35–42.

⁴¹*Histoire de la Géorgie*, I, 347, 590, 622, 648; and Allen, *History of the Georgian People*, 94. After the sacking of Ardanuĉ and other Georgian settlements the Iberian king, David II, waged a very violent campaign against the Turkmen. By the end of his reign (1125) he had succeeded in removing the nomadic threat, but many of the fragile settlements in the Marchlands were left abandoned for decades. Ardahan is one of the few sites which still remained inhabited when Dimitri I (1125–54) came to the throne; see "Das Leben des Königs der Könige Dawith (Dawith II, 1089–1125)," ed. and trans. M. Tseretheli, *Bedi Kartlisa* 26–27 (1957), 47 f, 61 ff. In the early 14th century Ardanuĉ is still the principal city of the district; see *Géographie d'Aboulféda*, trans. and comm. J. Reinaud, II.1 (Paris, 1848), 286.

fifteenth century the region fell under Ottoman influence, but the fortress was held by the *atabegs* of Saatabago.⁴² The rulers of Ardanuĉ were Georgians who had converted to Islam. In 1551 the Ottomans assumed direct control over the region when İskender Paşa of Erzurum seized the fortress from Atabey Keyhusrev II, who had earlier allied himself with the Persians.⁴³ From this period through the nineteenth century the fortress seems to have been called "Gevhernik" by the local Turks.⁴⁴ The word may be Persian in origin and have the meaning "precious stone."⁴⁵ The name could also be derived from the abandoned silver mines near the outcrop. The direct Ottoman occupation of the fortress, which is confirmed by the recently removed inscription of 1560,⁴⁶ lasted until 1587, when the sultan appointed the clan of Poti P'āšenc' to administer the district from the castle.⁴⁷ These new rulers were most troublesome to the denizens of the city below and to the neighboring leaders, especially the Bey of Artvin. The latter and his descendants maintained a blood feud with the clan at Ardanuĉ until 1833. At that time the last leader of the Poti P'āšenc' was seized in battle by Blind Hussein. Hussein's occupation of the castle was brief since he himself was defeated by Ahmet Paşa of Kars. From the late fifteenth century to 1920 the Armenian population of the town grew considerably, probably replacing Georgians who were migrating north.⁴⁸ The Russians occupied the fortress from 1877 to about 1919.⁴⁹

Although European cartographers give prominence to Ardanuĉ as late as the eighteenth century,⁵⁰ the first brief description of the walled town and fortress is not made until the early nineteenth century by Inĉicean. In May 1834 M. Brosset pub-

⁴²Artvin, 1973, 28. Cf. J. L. Bacqué-Grammont, "Études turco-safavides, IV. Une description ottomane du Saatabago vers 1520," *Bedi Kartlisa* 36 (1978), 150 ff.

⁴³Artvin, 1973, 28; *Histoire de la Géorgie*, II.1, *Histoire moderne*, trans. M. Brosset (St. Petersburg, 1856), 449.

⁴⁴Yovhannēsean, *Hayasdani*, 596.

⁴⁵Artvin, 1973, 95 note 9; M. Özder and A. Aydın, *Yazı ve Resimlerle Çevre İncelemesi*, I, Artvin İli (Ankara, 1969), 18.

⁴⁶Özder and Aydın, *Yazı*, I, 19.

⁴⁷Yovhannēsean, *Hayasdani*, 597.

⁴⁸Ibid., 596 note 2; cf. Allen, "March-Lands," 150; Ėp'rikean, "Artanuĉ," *Patkerazard*, 1, 329–31; and V. Vardanyan, "Artanuĉ," *Haykakan Sovetakan Hanragitaran*, 2, 134 f. In the 19th century the Armenians make up the majority of the population in the towns of Artvin, Ardanuĉ, Ardahan, and Oltu, while the Muslims predominate in the countryside; see Allen and Muratoff, *Caucasian Battlefields*, 293.

⁴⁹Artvin, 1973, 30 ff; Allen and Muratoff, *Caucasian Battlefields*, 212 f, 248, 280 ff.

⁵⁰On the map by De L'Isle the castle is listed as Artanoudji; on Bellin's map the site is labeled as Ardano. See note 10 above.

lished a revision and translation of Inčičean's account.⁵¹ Within the confines of the civilian settlement he found a newly built Armenian church, a mosque, "un collège," and a hamam. On the interior of the adjacent fort Inčičean saw two standing columns, rock-cut cisterns, and a stone church. He was the only visitor to report the presence of columns. In 1844 Koch found that the town, which had 120 occupied houses, was surrounded by a circuit and had the ruins of an "old" church on the north flank.⁵² Ł. Ališan describes succinctly both the fortress and the walled city, noting that the former is sufficiently older than the latter.⁵³ M. Yovhannēsean's comments on the fortification seem in part to be derived from Inčičean's observations; the former includes the legend about the "queen's grave" and a secret passage that leads from the summit to the Ardanuç river.⁵⁴ The entrance to this tunnel was supposedly located in the 1960s.⁵⁵

The steep cliffs and oblong form of the outcrop provide such a formidable defense that the occupants merely constructed a perimeter wall without towers along the edges of the summit (Fig. 22). Caves along the precipitous northwest face of the outcrop have been converted into fighting platforms with parapets. These caves are connected to the summit by a series of tunnels. It is only at the northeast that the topography is less severe and can accommodate a path of approach and entrance. This path, which terminates at the lower level of the entrance complex (B on Fig. 20), is protected at the north from the remote possibility of attack by outwork A (Fig. 23). A door in the outwork gives access to a narrow shelf which was probably once protected by a brattice. The masonry of the outwork consists of very crude stones aligned in somewhat irregular courses and anchored to a poured

core. The path of approach follows the base of the outcrop at the north (below D) until it reaches the stairway at B. The Turkish army, which periodically uses the citadel for training exercises, has replaced the missing lower level of the staircase with a permanent metal ladder. A similar device is located at the upper level of C (Fig. 24), where the entrance path makes a 90° turn. In both cases the metal ladders may be replacing the original steps of wood, which the defenders could withdraw at the time of attack. The remains of the stone steps are positioned atop a cleft in the ascending rock face. The outer flank of the steps is protected by a stone parapet, which survives now only in the upper level (Fig. 24). Part of the parapet is reinforced by a relieving arch below. A similar device is used in the circuit of Ferhatlı Kalesi. In general the facing stones are larger and of a slightly better quality than those in outwork A. Unfortunately, the inner gate of this entrance corridor (at C)⁵⁶ has collapsed like its lower-level counterpart (at B).

The interior of the fortress seems to have changed little since Koch visited this site over 140 years ago. Then he found only large piles of rubble which indicated where impressive structures once stood. The most northeasterly point on the outcrop at D (Fig. 20) must have been a large room with accommodations for a fighting platform to guard the path below. Over the rest of the sloping top are walls whose function is not apparent today. One of the few exceptions is church E (Fig. 26, indicated by arrow), which may be the one erected by Ašot I and dedicated to the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul. When Koch visited the site he found that the small church was divided into four chapels.⁵⁷ Today one apse is visible at the southeast (Figs. 20, 28), and it is likely that a second apse was positioned to the north. In the northwest corner of the surviving ecclesiastical complex is what appears to be an oval cistern (not visible in Fig. 28); the apex of its domical top has collapsed. The masonry of the church is very crude. The interior and exterior facings consist of large, poorly cut blocks which are bound in irregular courses by rock chips and the sparse application of mortar (Figs. 27–28). The poured core consists of fieldstones, pebbles, and small amounts of mortar. Today a metal frame, which once held the image of Atatürk, stands in the

⁵¹ Brosset, "Description de l'ancienne Géorgie," 468 f.

⁵² Koch, *Wanderungen*, II, 189–92. See the photo by Marr in Allen's "March-Lands," opp. p. 141. The most detailed account of this church comes from the narrative of Marr (Georgii Merčul', *Žitie*, 95–97 [comm.]). He carefully measured what in his day was a ruined church with a cruciform plan. This structure was built over the original medieval edifice on a rock platform along the precipitous north flank of the town. The interior of the church was once stuccoed and painted. Cf. fig. 173 in Ėp'rikean, "Artanuč," *Patkazarad*, 1, 330.

The bishop of Ardanuç resided not in the town or fortress but in a nearby monastery. Cf. R. Edwards, "The Cilician Tetrarch at Milvan," *Abstracts of the Eleventh Annual Byzantine Studies Conference* (Toronto, 1985), 37 f.

⁵³ Ł. Ališan, as cited in Yovhannēsean, *Hayasdani*, 596 note 1. From my own observations it appears likely that the town's circuit was once joined to outwork A; cf. Figs. 20 and 25, and Marr, in Georgii Merčul', *Žitie*, 96 (comm.).

⁵⁴ Yovhannēsean, *Hayasdani*, 596 f.

⁵⁵ M. Pereira, *East of Trebizond* (London, 1971), 196.

⁵⁶ Marr (Georgii Merčul', *Žitie*, 109 [comm.]) saw standing gates and a beautiful rectangular door surmounted by a tympanum.

⁵⁷ Koch, *Wanderungen*, II, 193. Marr (Georgii Merčul', *Žitie*, 110 [comm.]) found that the fortress-church had two nartheces and its plastered walls were devoid of painting. He located a chamber below the church and a spherical receptacle at the west.

southeast apse (Fig. 28). Electric cables, which illuminate a larger bust of Atatürk to the south (Fig. 26), are strung across the width of the church. One enterprising denizen from the village has placed his television antenna near the corner of the nave (far right, Fig. 27). The partially scarped oval room F to the south may have been a cistern (Fig. 20).

There are substantial fragments of standing walls in the south half of the bailey. The facing stones in these walls as well as throughout the circuit show some variations in style. Since there are also abrupt changes in the consistency of the poured core, it is certain that the fortress is the result of many building periods. From E through G the outer facing of the east circuit consists of elongated blocks (Fig. 22), while the exterior of the west circuit from G to I has smaller, squarer stones laid in regular courses (Fig. 29). The inner facing stones of the southwest circuit differ in size and quality; there are even patches of repair (Fig. 30). This area of the wall is substantially wider than the walls elsewhere in the castle. This may have been for protection against catapults which could have been positioned on the small plateau immediately below the cliffs.

Şavşat

Near the northwest edge of Şavket Dağ the flat summit of a small outcrop is surrounded by a circuit wall with limited defenses. Şavşat Kalesi is in the immediate proximity of the Şavşat Suyu and its flanking road at the northwest (Fig. 32). This stream constitutes one of the tributaries of the Merehevi Suyu, which is itself an addendum to the swift-flowing Çoruh. Steep cliffs directly to the north of the fortress (Fig. 42) form the other half of a defile that restricts access to the route connecting Artvin to Vardosan. Directly southwest of the fortress is the road joining Şavşat Köyü,⁵⁸ which is approximately 3 km southwest of the fort, to Ardahan. Today the preferred route between Artvin and Ardahan is via Ardanuç.

Surprisingly, the fortress of Şavşat (Arabic: Şawšit;⁵⁹ Latin: Savsethia; Georgian: Şavšet'i; Armenian: Şawšet') is not represented on the two principal eighteenth-century European maps of Georgia.⁶⁰ Wakhoucht likewise does not list this site

in his description of "Chawchethi," but he does place the fortress of "Thoukharisi" in the proximity of the cathedral of Tbeti/Tbeth(i).⁶¹ Considering that Şavşat Kalesi is only a few kilometers from the ruined church at Tbeti, Wakhoucht has incorrectly identified the fort. According to Leonti Mroveli, Odzrkhos, the grandson of K'art'los (the eponymous primogenitor of the Georgians), built the city-fortress of T'ukharisi/T'uxarisi. Toumanoff has determined that this fort is somewhere near the border of Tayk'/Tao and Klarjet'i and not in the district of Şavšet'i.⁶² We know almost nothing about the specific history of Şavşat Kalesi because its name is synonymous with—and thus inseparable from—the district for which it is the administrative center.⁶³ S. Eremyan believes, without adequate justification, that this region was separated from the Armenian province of Gugark' and added to the Georgian realm in A.D. 338.⁶⁴ In the early ninth century the Georgian Bagratid Adarnase I acquired this district and its fortress.⁶⁵ His son Ashot I (the Great) held suzerainty here and later (before 881) his grandson, Guaram. The latter is mentioned as building and/or repairing fortresses in Samts'khe, and eventually he cedes the Şavšet'i to his son Nasr.⁶⁶ It is likely that Şavşat Kalesi was rebuilt by Adarnase I since the site was burned by Marwān about 744 to prevent the Armenian Bagratids from using it as a refuge.⁶⁷ In the late tenth century Şavšet'i may have been absorbed into the holdings of Curopalate David.⁶⁸ In 1064 the armies of Alp Arslan subdued the Marchlands, but the fortress here seems to have remained in Geor-

⁶¹ Wakhoucht, *Description*, 113, map No. 1.

⁶² Leonti Mroveli, 8–10, as cited by Toumanoff, *Studies*, 444 f.

⁶³ Allen, *History*, 238, 240, 251; and Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, 354.

⁶⁴ Eremyan, *Hayastan*, 73.

⁶⁵ Juanşer, 251, as cited by Toumanoff, *Studies*, 413, 485. Prior to Adarnase I this district appears to be sparsely populated; see Peeters, *Histoires* (above, note 4), 227.

⁶⁶ Toumanoff, *Studies*, 486 note 215, 488–92. After the death of Nasr (888) it is probable that Gurgēn I took control of Şavšet'i and Artani.

⁶⁷ *Artvin*, 1973, 20 note 35; and B. Martin-Hisard, "Les Arabes en Géorgie occidentale au VIII^e s.: Etude sur l'idéologie politique géorgienne," *Bedi Kartlisa* 40 (1982), 105 note 5, 126 f.

⁶⁸ Honigsmann, *Ostgrenze*, 159, 165 f; and J. Forsyth, *The Byzantine-Arab Chronicle (938–1034) of Yahyā B. Sa'īd al-Anṭākī*, Diss. (University of Michigan), University Microfilms International (1977), 477. Gurgēn II of Iberia (d. 1008), as well as his son, Bagrat III (d. 1014), and his grandson Georgi I (1014–27), ruled the districts of Artani, Kola, and Şavšet'i. These regions were probably guaranteed in the settlement between Gurgēn II and Basil's general, the Kanikleios Nikephoros Uranos (*ibid.*, 557–60, 568 f, 598f, and the First Preliminary Report, 17), but they may have briefly come under Greek control in 1022 (*Histoire de la Géorgie*, I, 309).

⁵⁸ The name is also spelled Şavket on the Deutsche Heereskarte "Artvin," Blatt-Nr. B-XV, 1:200,000, 1943.

⁵⁹ Al-Balādhuri (*Kitāb Futūh al-Buldān*, trans. P. Hitti, I [New York, 1916], 318) describes the occupation of this region as well as Samts'khe by the Arabs.

⁶⁰ See note 10 above.

gian hands. In the early 1190s Guzan, the Duke of Šavšet'i and Klarjet'i, used this site as a base in his unsuccessful revolt against Queen Tamar.⁶⁹ From the early thirteenth century through most of the Ottoman period the disposition of the fortress is uncertain. In the 1840s many Russians and Poles, who escaped their forced conscription in the imperial army by deserting to the Turks, were resettled in the region of Šavsat, some as slaves, others as freedmen.⁷⁰ In 1951 Lord Kinross mentions merely the presence of a fortress at Šavsat.⁷¹

The easiest point of access into the fortress, and consequently the one most heavily fortified, is at the south (Fig. 31). Because of extensive landslides, the path of approach to gate B is impossible to determine. The almost square plan of the circuit is characterized by the absence of projecting salients. Except for tower D, which was added after the construction of the existing circuit (Fig. 37), the only identifiable salients are A, C, and E. Curiously, the rounded mass of A extends into the single bailey of the fortress, leaving only a shallow angular projection on the exterior (Figs. 32, 34, 36). At the northeast E extends far enough to accommodate an embrasured window (cf. Figs. 37–38). E is the only unit in the fortress that provides any means of defense. As the periphery of the outcrop becomes more steep and impassable at the north and west, there is a concomitant decrease in the height and mass of the circuit (Fig. 33). The north face of the rock actually consists of a series of vertically faced shelves overgrown with a shaggy, dense ground cover. When these peculiar plants have been moistened by rain or even by the morning dew, they attain the consistency of sea kelp, making a normally treacherous ascent impossible.

The masonry throughout the fortress is very consistent. The exterior facing stones are roughly cut square and rectangular blocks laid in somewhat regular courses (Fig. 35). While it is clear that some sections of the exterior facing were left unstuccoed intentionally, erosion has removed the plaster in a haphazard way elsewhere (Figs. 36, 38). As with the other military sites in the province of Artvin, there is no evidence of galleting. The interior facing stones are generally smaller and not as carefully hewn or aligned in their courses (Fig. 40). Because the facing stones vary greatly in size, their average dimensions are impossible to deter-

mine. Rather than rock chips, the use of mortar as a filler appears to be the most common method for plugging the outer interstices. There is no consistent attempt to taper the inner sides of each block to bind more firmly with the poured core (Figs. 39–40). The use of mortar in the core is especially generous. The only finished blocks of ashlar in the exterior facing are the quoins at the angles (Figs. 37–38). Wooden headers appear in the foundation of chamber C and the interior of room E. Because of sharp vertical seams and the overlapping facing stones, it is certain that the rounded chamber C (Fig. 37), tower D (Fig. 35), the outer of the two parallel walls between A and C (Fig. 31), and the vaulted room in E (Fig. 39) were added after the initial construction. The core and facing stones of these additions are almost identical to those in the rest of the fort, indicating that they were probably added by the same builders soon after the initial construction.

Today little can be said about entrance B because of severe damage (Fig. 36). Some sort of door was positioned in the outer wall, forcing those approaching the fortress to turn east and then north in order to pass through the main entrance. The only surviving salient at the west is the three-storey tower A (Figs. 32, 34, 36). Entrance at ground level is gained by a breach (door?) at the northeast (Fig. 31). The only other openings are two ventilation shafts at the north. A similar shaft is located in the second level of A. Square joist holes on the interior indicate that wooden floors were supported by large crossbeams. At the east is a squareheaded door/window which gives access to an elevated section of the circuit wall (Fig. 34). This was probably the only entrance into A. Above the third level there is no indication of a fighting platform with battlements. This tower is not an offensive structure equipped with embrasured windows but a place of retreat. Salient C is similar in that it has few apparent openings except for a partially blocked high-placed door/window at the east (Fig. 37). In what survives of the adjacent tower D there is evidence of at least one upper-level window and a lower-level door at the east (Fig. 35). The most conspicuous features of the east facade are the extruding corners of the vaulted room E (Fig. 38). Only the quoins of the upper two floors are still in situ. The interior of E is peculiar in that a fairly narrow vault spans the full three storeys (Fig. 39). Joist holes indicate that what now appears to be an open west end was actually completed by wood. In the first floor at the east are two extant embrasured loopholes and a hole

⁶⁹ Honigmann, *Ostgrenze*, 185 f; *Histoire de la Géorgie*, I, 327 f, 420 ff; and Allen, *History*, 90.

⁷⁰ Guarracino, "Notes," 296 ff.

⁷¹ Kinross, *Taurus*, 44 f.

that once held a third (Fig. 31). The second level has three broadly splayed embrasures, each of which is covered by a corbeled arch (Fig. 41). At the third level there is a breach in the east wall near the apex of the vault. In respect to its mass the largest unit in the fortress is donjon F. On the exterior the donjon is delineated only in its upper floor by ashlar quoins. The resulting vertical seam would ensure that the collapse of the upper levels of E and G would leave the east wall of F unharmed. Except for two splayed ventilation shafts at the second level, the only apparent opening in the entire donjon is a high-placed door at the west (Fig. 39). This door, which was entered by a removable ladder, has jambs framed with large ashlar blocks. The door was secured by a crossbar bolt. On the interior the heavily mortared masonry is layered in neat courses; square joist holes mark the floor levels. The only modern addition to this fortress is a Turkish flag atop the donjon. At point G is a horseshoe-shaped niche flanked on each side by a large post hole. This may have functioned as the apse for a small chapel with a wooden nave.⁷² The wall from H to I shows no indications of any attached structures. The circuit along the entire west flank from I to A is so badly damaged that only the foundation survives. The function of room J remains a mystery, but a scarped depression in the center may be a cistern.

One of the most important structures in the fortress is chapel K. Unfortunately, the south and west walls of the nave, most of its barrel vault, and at least eighty percent of the facing stones have fallen away (Fig. 42). What does survive is deteriorating rapidly. The exterior of the east end shows the hole where a single apsidal window once stood (Fig. 43). There are also the distinct traces of a gable over its flat east face. So many of the facing stones are missing from the interior of the chapel that it is impossible to determine the presence of any apsidal niches or even the salient junction between the apse and the nave, if one existed.

Ardahan

On the gently sloping north bank of the eastern-flowing Kur(a) Nehri⁷³ stands the fortress of Ar-

dahan. At an altitude of 1,897 m this site is nestled in a large fertile plain defined by the Yalnızçam Silsilesi at the west, the hills of the Ardahan Yaylâsı at the east (not depicted in Fig. 1), and scattered peaks at the north and south. All of the major roads in the vale pass through Ardahan. Aside from the previously discussed routes to the north and west of Ardahan (see Introduction), there are also direct roads to Çıldır, Kars, and Oltu (via either Göle or Olur). Today Ardahan has a population of over eleven thousand and is the commercial center for the northwestern communities in the *vilâyet* of Kars. Because this site held a similar commercial importance during the late antique and medieval periods,⁷⁴ there is the occasional mention of its name in the texts.

According to Pseudo-Movsēs Xorenac'i, Ardahan (Arabic: Arṭahāl;⁷⁵ Georgian: Artan(i),⁷⁶ Artani; Armenian: Artahan) was the center of one of the western districts of Gugark.⁷⁷ Like Şavşat, the name of the district and its most important fortified town are synonymous.⁷⁸ This site is not mentioned in the History specifically attributed to Movsēs. In his recent study of Armenian forts Yovhannēsean mentions that at some period in preliterate Armenia Ardahan was returned to Georgia by sworn agreement.⁷⁹ Ardahan seems to have been known in both Armenian and Georgian folk tales.⁸⁰ Much of what we know of the history of this site is found in Georgian texts. According to Leonti Mroveli, it was during the period of the Pharnabazid dynasty that Artani was joined to Kola in the south and Ĵavaxet'i in the north to form the dukedom of Cunda/Tsunda along the southwestern-most tributary of the Kur(a) River.⁸¹ Part of this territory may have been acquired in the late fourth century B.C. at the expense of the Orontids in Armenia. The city of Ardahan, which was also called Atōnē or Kadjtha-Kalak, was fortified by one of the

⁷⁴ Manandian, *Trade*, 108 f, 155; and K. Miller, *Itineraria Romana* (Stuttgart, 1916), 653. In the latter Ardahan is listed as Caspiae. Cf. W. Tomaschek, "Caspiae," *RE* 3 (1899), 1654.

⁷⁵ Al-Balādhuri, *Kitāb*, 318; Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, 354; and V. Minorsky, "Transcaucasia," *JA* 217 (1930), 55 note 2.

⁷⁶ On the origin of the Georgian name see Wakhoucht, *Description*, 75.

⁷⁷ *Géographie de Moïse de Corène d'après Ptolémée*, trans. A. Soukry (Venice, 1881), 46. The significance of this attribution is discussed in the Conclusion. See also Eremyan, *Hayastana*, 40 f.

⁷⁸ For comments on the boundaries of this district refer to Toumanoff, *Studies*, 439 note 9.

⁷⁹ Yovhannēsean, *Hayasdani*, 591.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, note 2; and M. Saint-Martin, *Mémoires historiques et géographiques sur l'Arménie*, II (Paris, 1819), 187.

⁸¹ Leonti Mroveli, 24, as cited by Toumanoff, *Studies*, 103 note 159, 185–87, 446–48; and Saint-Martin, *Mémoires*, 198 f.

⁷² R. Edwards, "Ecclesiastical Architecture in the Fortifications of Armenian Cilicia: Second Report," *DOP* 37 (1983), 131 f.

⁷³ On the official provincial map of Turkey ("Türkiye," 1:2,000,000, Istanbul, 1966) this river is called the Kuru Çay. See also Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, 356; and M. Brosset, "Description des principaux fleuves de la Grande-Arménie," *JA* 12 (1833), 459 ff.

mythical descendants of K^cart^clos.⁸² During the reign of Pharnabazus I it was the site of an important battle.⁸³ By the mid-first century A.D. another Armenian dynasty, the Arsacids, extended its influence to the Arsiani Mountains by capturing some Georgian lands.⁸⁴ Thereafter the Georgians occasionally extended their influence into the upper Kur(a), and by A.D. 387 they firmly secured the entire region.⁸⁵ Eventually, the town became the seat of a bishop.⁸⁶ In the 530s the house of the Guaramids took possession of the region. According to Juanšer, in the third quarter of the eighth century Adarnase I, the founder of the Georgian Bagratids, was given the lands of Erušet'i and a part of Artani.⁸⁷ From this base his heirs and collaterals would consolidate most of Georgia and, despite some occasional lapses,⁸⁸ keep possession of both parts of Artani well into the thirteenth century.⁸⁹ After the conquests of Alp Arslan the few remaining Georgian princes in the Marchlands had to pay tribute to retain their castles.⁹⁰ Aside from Ardahan there are only indirect references to other fortified sites in this district. In the early sixteenth century Artani played a prominent part in the defense of eastern Anatolia.⁹¹

During the period of the pre-nineteenth-century Ottoman sultanate Artani appears to have been

partitioned into two *sancaks*, one of which belonged to the *vilâyet* of Kars, the other to Çıldır.⁹² From his rather confused account of the region, it seems that the seventeenth-century traveler Evliya Çelebi did not leave us a description of the fortress.⁹³ One hundred years later this site appears on two European maps of Georgia as Artani.⁹⁴ In the second quarter of the nineteenth century Koch visited this site and passed on some important observations.⁹⁵ Unlike its present counterpart, most of the late Ottoman town was located on the north bank of the river, partly within the confines of the fortress (Fig. 44). The upper terrace at the northeast end of the fortified enclosure contained a citadel, of which only fragments survive today. On one tower Koch located an "Arabic" inscription which bore the date 966. Considering the periods when the Shaddâdids of Ganja dominated the regions of the middle Kur(a), a late tenth-century date seems very possible and may reflect a temporary extension of Kurdish influence into the upper Kur(a).⁹⁶ During the Russo-Turkish War of 1877 the Ottomans saw Ardahan as both an offensive and defensive base from which they could secure the Armenian Highlands. They built (and in some cases improved with the assistance of German engineers) a number of fortifications, located only a few kilometers to the north and east of the medieval fortress. Despite the presence of long-range artillery procured from Krupps, the Turks were defeated decisively and did not regain the site as a permanent possession until 1921.⁹⁷

The modern town of Ardahan, which is located on the south bank of the river, is essentially a large army depot where the civilian population is out-

⁸² Toumanoff, *Studies*, 445 note 35; *Histoire de la Géorgie*, I, 22 note 4; and Wakhoucht, *Description*, 105.

⁸³ *Histoire de la Géorgie*, I, 39.

⁸⁴ Leonti Mroveli, 44, as cited by Toumanoff, *Studies*, 471 notes 149 and 151. At the time of the Roman invasions in 65 B.C. (Dio Cassius 37.2) the lands on both sides of the Kur(a) river were firmly in Iberian control.

⁸⁵ *Histoire de la Géorgie*, I, 65 ff. If the Artandan of P^cawstos Buzand (*Patmut'w'n Hayoc'* [Venice, 1933], 252) is Artahan, then the brief Persian invasion of this plain may have facilitated the Georgian occupation. P^cawstos makes no mention of a fortress.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 195; and Wakhoucht, *Description*, 105.

⁸⁷ Juanšer, 243, as cited by Toumanoff, *Studies*, 345, 412 f, 416, 466, 485.

⁸⁸ Honigsmann, *Ostgrenze*, 161, 163, 165 f, 173.

⁸⁹ Toumanoff, *Studies*, 489, 491, 496, 497 note 269; and *Histoire de la Géorgie*, I, 283, 309, 345, 381, 507, 514 f, 532, 590, 648.

⁹⁰ J. Markwart, *Skizzen zur historischen Topographie und Geschichte von Kaukasien* (Vienna, 1929), 50–53; and M. Kirzioğlu, *Kars Tarihi*, I (Istanbul, 1953), 227–53, 265–74, 291–517.

⁹¹ In the political vacuum created by the collapse of the Akoyunlu state (ca. 1501) Ardahan, Göle, Tortum, Oltu, and Ispir, all of which were once dependents of Tabriz, fell into the hands of Mze-Çâbûk, the *atabeg* of Saatabago/Samts'khe. See: Kirzioğlu, *Kars*, 507; *Histoire de la Géorgie*, II.1, 210 f, 214, 223; and J. L. Bacqué-Grammont and Ch. Adle, "Notes et documents sur Mze-Çâbûk, *atabeg* de Géorgie méridionale (1500–1515), et les Safavides. Etudes turco-safavides V," *Studia Iranica* 8 (1978), 213–20.

At a later period, Greeks from the Pontos settled in Ardahan and its environs; see G. Grégoriades, *Hoi Pontioi tou Kaukasou periphereiās Kars-Artachan* (Thessalonica, 1957).

⁹² Brosset, "Description de l'ancienne Géorgie," 470; and Evliya Çelebi, *Narratives of Travels in Europe, Asia, and Africa in the Seventeenth Century*, trans. J. von Hammer (London, 1834), I.1, 94 f, 100; II, 175. Just prior to the late 19th-century Russian occupation of most of the Marchlands, Ardahan as well as other sites in this paper was included in the Province of Erzurum; consult: K. Mostras, *Dictionnaire géographique de l'empire ottoman* (St. Petersburg, 1873), 4 f; and V. Cuinet, *La Turquie d'Asie*, I (Paris, 1890), 130 ff.

⁹³ Evliya Çelebi, *Narratives*, II, 176 ff.

⁹⁴ See note 10 above.

⁹⁵ Koch, *Wanderungen*, II, 214 f; and J. Edmondson and H. Lack, "The Turkish and Caucasian Collections of C. Koch 1: Turkey," *Notes from the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh* 35 (1976–77), 321–35. Cf. Ėp'rikean, "Artahan," *Patkharazard*, 1, 325 f, and "Ardahan," *Haykakan Sovetakan Hanragitaran*, 2, 7.

⁹⁶ V. Minorsky, *Studies in Caucasian History* (London, 1953), 33 ff; and V. Minorsky and C. Bosworth, "al-Kurdj," *EP* (1981), 488 f. I located an epigraph in Arabic script high up on a tower near the southeast entrance, but I was prohibited by the local military authorities from taking a photograph.

⁹⁷ Allen and Muratoff, *Caucasian Battlefields*, 29–43, 115 ff, 254, 266–75, 280 f, 500; and F. Taeschner, "Ardahan," *EP* (1960), 626.

numbered two to one by its military counterpart. Unlike the military officials in the *vilâyet* of Artvin, who were ready to give reasonable access to the medieval military sites, those in Kars refused admittance into Ardahan Kalesi for reasons of "security." The fortress in Ardahan is presently garrisoned, and part of the interior is a rifle range (Fig. 44). Consequently, I was unable to measure this site, and my brief description is derived from observations of the exterior.

Immediately apparent is the fairly symmetrical plan of the site, which has the compactness of a garrison fort and the exposed position of a city-circuit. Its south wall follows the edge of the Kur(a) Nehri and abruptly turns at both the east and west to form right angles. Polygonal towers of roughly the same height as the circuit (approx. 6 to 7 m) are placed at regular intervals. It is only at the west, flanking the main entrance, that the towers rise substantially beyond the height of the circuit. Near the southwest corner a postern, which once gave ready access to the river, has been blocked. At the east the circuit ascends the face of the gently sloping outcrop to join the citadel-donjon in the northeast corner. There appear to be no walls on the interior of the fortress to divide the single bailey. The exterior facing of the fortress appears to be remarkably consistent. It is a combination of roughly cut polygonal and square stones which have been laid in irregular courses and secured by an abundance of mortar (Fig. 45). The frequent exposed angles of the towers are defined by quoins of neatly cut ashlar. Small wooden headers aligned in parallel rows are visible in at least three levels of the exterior facing. These poles once extended from the face of the wall to support the scaffolding on which the masons worked. The merlons as well as the thin upper portion of the walls and towers are modern additions of either the Ottomans or the Russians in the nineteenth century. Many of the embrasured loopholes, which are framed by neatly cut blocks of ashlar, have been enlarged to accommodate small cannons. There is evidence that a ditch once preceded the land walls. Today a few scattered homes surround the perimeter of the fortress. Considering its peculiar features, it appears that the fortress is a Georgian construction. Although we cannot establish a chronology, the circuit at the site bears some resemblance to its late medieval counterparts at Kutaisi and Mcheta.⁹⁸

⁹⁸ First Preliminary Report, 19 note 22. It is quite possible that this site was severely damaged during the campaigns of Selim I (1515–16) and was entirely rebuilt by conscript Georgian laborers.

CONCLUSION

The architectural features and plans of these military sites confirm what we already know from our fragmentary sources—that the Georgians are responsible for their construction. Those features that are common in Georgian military architecture,⁹⁹ such as a donjon attached to a single ward, are seen with surprising regularity in and near the *vilâyet* of Artvin. The Iberian penchant for sharply tapering salients of various shapes, the ubiquitous use of crudely cut square and polygonal stones (often in conjunction with quoins), and the curious design of overhanging machicolations (e.g., Artvin) contrast with the fortresses of their Armenian neighbors to the east and south.¹⁰⁰ The Armenians employ multiple baileys rather than donjons; generally, they use a finer quality masonry, frequently ashlar, and build only rounded towers onto a circuit which always has nonangular curving faces. There appear to be only two exceptions to the general rule that the Georgians were not influenced to a great degree by the designs of contemporary Armenian fortifications. The main entrances of the fortresses at Şavşat, Artvin, and Ardanuç tend to be complex structures with a bent or deflected pathway, which bears a marked similarity to Armenian plans.¹⁰¹ Also, at all of the sites except Ardahan, there is a tendency for the plan of the circuit to follow the sinuosities of the outcrop, which is somewhat atypical of the Georgians considering the symmetrical nature of early Iberian fortifications. The immediate topography of the forts in the *vilâyet* of Artvin can modify plans to the extent that towers become necessities on the north flank of Ferhatlı but are useless at Ardanuç, which was not exposed to direct fire from the adjacent road or town. Ardahan, which is located in a very exposed area, had to be encircled by closely spaced towers. Aside from sharing certain architectural features, these fortresses can contribute to our knowledge of the historical geography of the region.

In his highly respected study of Armenian geography based on the *Aṣṣarḥac'oyc'* of Pseudo-Movsēs Xorenac'i (often attributed to Anania), S. Eremyan depicts the Armenian province of Gu-

⁹⁹ First Preliminary Report, 19 note 22; and V. Beridze, *Arxitektura Samcxe 13th–16th c.* (Tbilisi, 1955), 15–24, 28 f, pls. 1–7.

¹⁰⁰ First Preliminary Report, 18 note 21; and R. Edwards, *The Fortifications of Armenian Cilicia*, DOS 23 (Washington, D.C., 1987).

¹⁰¹ R. Edwards, "The Design and Placement of Gateways in the Fortifications of Armenian Cilicia," *Abstracts of the One Hundred and Nineteenth Meeting of the American Oriental Society* (San Francisco, 1980), 39–40.

gark^ς as extending so far to the west as to reach the summits of the Pontic range in relatively close proximity to the Black Sea.¹⁰² In his scheme the four districts (*gawars*) that form this western appendage of Gugark^ς are: Artahan, Inner (Lower/West) Jawaxk^ς, Klarjġk^ς, and Šawšet^ς. These districts correspond to the Georgian regions outlined in the Introduction: Artani, Erušet'i, Klarjet'i (Cholarzēnē), and Šavšet'i. In addition to these four he includes Upper Jawaxk^ς in the group forming the constituent parts of the Armenian Mosxika, the section of Armenian Gugark^ς that was also "claimed" by Georgia.¹⁰³ Eremyan's work, as well as the studies by some of his predecessors and contemporaries, has left the impression that all of western Gugark^ς was settled by Armenians as well as Georgians.¹⁰⁴ However, my own field research in this region has revealed that at present there is not one example of Armenian military architecture west of the lower Arsiani Mountains.¹⁰⁵ Scholars who have investigated the churches in the same region have found only Georgian constructions.¹⁰⁶ If the Armenians had neither settlements of civilians nor even garrison forts to maintain troops, then it would have been impossible to exercise serious political or military control over the region. Snow and mud must have left the two medieval roads connecting Ardahan with Šavšet and Ardanuġ impassable for six months each year,¹⁰⁷ preventing even a lightly armed force from crossing the Arsiani. An examination of the relevant comments from the ancient and medieval geographers may help to resolve this problem.

The earliest and in some respects the most specific account of the topography in this region is from Strabo. One important feature of his description is that the borders of Georgia are defined by mountain ranges and occasionally an adjacent river. The area that we now know as Georgia Strabo divides into Kolchis at the west and Iberia at the east. He

says (11.2.15) that the Caucasus, which forms the northern border of Georgia, has spurs that extend south to join with the mountains of Armenia and those called the Moschikoi (καὶ τοῖς Ἀρμενίων ὄρεσι συνάπτουσι καὶ τοῖς Μοσχικοῖς καλουμένοις). Adjacent mountain peaks are called the Skydisēs and Paryadrēs. These southern spurs enclose Iberia, and they border on both Armenia and Kolchis (11.12.4; 12.3.18). Near the junction of these three regions is a plain traversed by rivers, the largest being the Kuros (11.3.2: περιλαμβάνοντες τὴν σύμπασαν Ἰβηρίαν καὶ συνάπτοντες πρὸς τε τὴν Ἀρμενίαν καὶ τὴν Κολχίδα· ἐν μέσῳ δ' ἐστὶ πεδῖον ποταμοῖς διάρρυτον, μεγίστῳ δὲ τῷ Κύρῳ). After the defeat of Antiochus I in 188 B.C. Strabo mentions (11.14.5) that the kings of Armenia and Sōphēnē enlarged their realms by annexing adjacent lands. From the Iberians they took the district on the side of Mount Paryadrēs (i.e., the regions of Tayk^ς and Ispir),¹⁰⁸ as well as Chorzēnē (Klarjet'i) and Gōgarēnē (Gugark^ς). The latter is on the far side of the Kuros River (Ἰβήρων δὲ τὴν τε παρῳρείαν τοῦ Παρναύδρου καὶ τὴν Χορζηνήν καὶ Γωγαρηνήν, πέραν οὖσαν τοῦ Κύρου). Since the first two regions are west of the Kuros, Gōgarēnē must be to the east¹⁰⁹ and south of that river. This view is confirmed by Strabo himself (11.14.4), who, when recounting the fertile and traditional regions of Armenia in a counterclockwise pattern, lists Saka-sēnē, the districts south of the upper Kuros, and Gōgarēnē.¹¹⁰ The Kur(a) becomes a river northeast of the modern Okam (Fig. 1), in what was once the Armenian district of Koġ, and flows through a broad plain along the east flank of the lower Arsiani Mountains before descending into Iberia. Since these mountains join with a chain of peaks that extend from the Caucasus to divide Georgia into the Kolchis and Iberia, they must be the Moschikoi of Strabo (cf. Procopius, *BP*, 8.2.24–26). The Arsiani are the only mountains adjacent to the upper Kuros plain and thus form a division between the three regions of Strabo.

In the *Ašxarhaġ'oyc^ς* of Pseudo-Movsēs Xorenac'i there is a precise description of the lands that specifically belong to the Georgians. The questions of the date and authorship of this work on world geography, which exists in two recensions, may never

¹⁰² Eremyan, *Hayastanə*, 118 and map.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 119.

¹⁰⁴ See note 6 above and most recently the map by Herman Vahramian in P. Cuneo et al., *Ani*, Documents of Armenian Architecture 12 (Milan, 1984), 34 f.

¹⁰⁵ Although my work is still "preliminary" in nature, I have surveyed most of the fortresses that were the centers of administration.

¹⁰⁶ See note 2 above.

¹⁰⁷ In the mid-1950s the Turkish army paved two of the roads across the lower Arsiani Mts. I was told by an army engineer that both are almost unmanageable from late December to mid-March. On 15 Dec. 1877 Col. Komarov succeeded in taking thirteen Russian battalions and two regiments of Cossacks and irregulars from Ardahan across the Yalnızcam pass, only to be trapped in Ardanuġ by blizzards for three weeks. See Allen and Muratoff, *Caucasian Battlefields*, 212; cf. 249–84, 293 f.

¹⁰⁸ Adontz, *Armenia*, 307.

¹⁰⁹ Toumanoff, *Studies*, 467; and M. Kiessling, "Gogarene," *RE* 7 (1912), 1553 f. This explains the cryptic note from Stephen of Byzantium (*Ethnica*, ed. A. Meineke [Berlin, 1849], 216): Γωγαρηνή, Χωρίον μεταξύ Κόλχων καὶ Ἰβήρων.

¹¹⁰ T. von Margwelaschwili, *Colchis, Iberien und Albanien* (1914), 19–21.

be resolved.¹¹¹ The relevant passages in the long recension read:¹¹²

Աշխարհ Վիրք, յելից կալով Եգերայ, յերի Սարմատիոյ առ Կաւկասով, մինչեւ ցԱղուանից սահման, եւ մինչեւ ցՀայոց սահմանն՝ առ Կուր գետուքս:

Եւ գաւառք են այս, սկսեալ ՚ի Վոճ գետոյ եւ ՚ի Նիւսիսոյ Տայոց. Կլարճք, զոր ՚ի Հայոց հանեալ է, եւ Շաւշէթ. Արտահան գաւառ, զոր առեալ է ՚ի Հայոց, ընդ որ անցանէ գետն հօր Կուր, որ ՚ի Տայոց գալով, ՚ի Կող գաւառէ ընդ ստորոտս Ջաւախաց, իջանէ ՚ի Սամցխէ եւ դառնայ յարեւելս՝ անցանելով ընդ Վերին աշխարհն Վրաց . . .

Գուգարք ՚ի մտից Ուտիացոց. ունի գաւառս ինն. զՉորոփոր, զԿողբափոր, զԾորափոր, զՏաշիր, զԹոնդս, զԿանկարս, զՊոլախս Վերին, զԱրտահան, զԿալարջս: Լինի անալուծ, եւ հաճար ծառ եւ սորովիլ եւ տօսախ: Ունին արդ Վիրք հանեալ ՚ի Հայոց.

The country of the Virk^c (east Georgia) is to the east of Eger (Egeria, i.e., west Georgia), on the side of (adjoining) Sarmatia, next to the Kawkasos (Caucasus), as far as the border of Atuan (Albania), and as far as the border of Armenia along the side of the river Kur.

And the *gawar*s (the districts) are the following, beginning from the river Voh (Çoruh) and north from Tayk^c: Klarč^c, which was taken from the Armenians, and Šawšet^c; Artahan is a *gawar*, which was taken from the Armenians, through which the Hzōr (Mighty)-Kur River flows, which coming from Tayk^c, from the *gawar* of Koł along the foothills of Jawaxk^c, descends into Samc^cxē and turns to the east flowing through the land of Upper Iberia . . .

Gugark^c, to the west of Utik^c, has nine *gawar*s: Jorop^cor, Kołbap^cor, Cobop^cor, Tašir, T^crełk^c, Kankark^c, Upper Jovaxk^c, Artahan, and Klarj^ck^c. There are giraffes [antelopes?], and beech trees, and quinces, and box trees. At present the Virk^c hold [these *gawar*s], having taken [them] from the Armenians.

The relevant passages in the short recension read:¹¹³

Վերիա, այս ինքն է Վիրք, յելից կալով Եգերայ առ Սարմատեաւ առ Կովկասու մինչեւ ցԱղուանից սահմանն առ Կուր գետով: Եւ գաւառք են ՚ի Վիրք այսորիկ. Կղարջք, Արտահան, Շաւշէթք, Ջաւախք, Սամցխէ . . .

Գուգարք ՚ի մտից կայ Ուտիոյ, եւ ունի գաւառս ինն զոր Վիրք ունին. Չորոփոր, Ծորոփոր, Կողբոփոր, Տաշիր, Թոնդք, Կանգարք, Արտահան, Ջաւախք, Կղարջք: Լինի ՚ի նմա անալուծ, եւ հաճարածառ եւ սերկելիլ եւ տօսախ.

Iberia, that is, the Virk^c, is on the east of Eger, next to Sarmatia, next to the Kovkasos (Caucasus), as far as

the border of Atuan, and next to the river Kur. And the *gawar*s in east Georgia are the following: Klarj^ck^c, Artahan, Šavšet^c, Javaxk^c, Samc^cxē . . .

Gugark^c is to the west of Utik^c, and it has nine *gawar*s which the Virk^c hold: Jorop^cor, Cobop^cor, Kołbop^cor, Tašir, T^crełk^c, Kangark^c, Artahan, Javaxk^c, and Klarj^ck^c. In this [province] there are giraffes, and beech trees, and quinces, and box trees.

Strabo's observation is confirmed and reinforced: the Kur(a) River is still the western boundary between Armenia and Georgia. In the long recension Pseudo-Movsēs recounts certain "contemporary" changes in that Klarč^c and Artahan were taken (retaken?) from the Armenians by the Georgians. In the same passages the capture of the nine *gawar*s of Armenian Gugark^c appears to be recent. It is significant that neither recension includes Šawšet^c as part of Gugark^c. It appears in both recensions as a Georgian district that has never been in Armenian hands. The exclusion of this district in a geography written by a very chauvinistic son of Hayk^c can only mean that Šavšet^c was never claimed by Armenians.¹¹⁴

The *gawar* of Javaxk^c is bipartite. It is mentioned in all four passages as being in both Georgia and Armenia. The confusion is resolved by the second passage from the long recension in which Upper Jovaxk^c is the specified part of Armenian Gugark^c. The mountains along the Kur(a) Nehri served as the boundary between Upper (or East) Javaxk^c and Lower (or West) Javaxk^c. The latter is directly north of the district of Artahan and corresponds to the Georgian Erušet^ci. Erušet^ci is an extremely mountainous district essentially formed by the eastern spurs of the lower Arsiani Mountains. Isolated, like its western neighbor Šavšet^ci, Erušet^ci may also have experienced the occasional punitive raid by an Armenian army, but this never affects its status as a purely Georgian region.

The Armenian claims over Artani and Klarjet^ci deserve further comment. The topography has determined that the exposed plain that constitutes the region of Artani (i.e., the Armenian district of Artahan) is not defensible by either Georgians or Armenians. The Georgians certainly commanded the

¹¹¹ The date of composition is probably between the late 6th century and the 690s. See R. Hews, "On the Date and Authorship of the Ašxarhač'uyc'," *REArm*, n.s. 4 (1967), 409–32; M. Xac'atryan, "VII.dari 'Ašxarhač'uyc'i' masin," *Patma-banasirakan Handes* 4 (1968), 81–99; and G. Petrosyan, "VII.dari haykakan 'Ašxarhač'uyc'i' masin," *Patma-banasirakan Handes* 2 (1979), 241–46.

¹¹² Pseudo-Movsēs Xorenac'i, *Ašxarhač'uyc'* (Venice, 1881), 28, 34 f.

¹¹³ Movsēs Xorenac'i, *Matenagruṭ'iwuk'* (Venice, 1865), 605, 610.

¹¹⁴ This district is also absent from a 14th-century text on Armenian geography; see A. Anasanyan, "T'ovmas Kilikec'u Ašxarhagruṭ'yunə," *Banber Matenadarani* 8 (1967), 282. The Georgian claim to Šavšet^ci can be traced back to ancient times; see Toumanoff, *Studies*, 445. Even Pliny (*NH* 6.9.25 f, 6.15.39) is quite specific about making the upper Kur(a) the dividing point between Iberia and Armenia. Cf. Ptolemy, *Geog.*, ed. Müller, 866, 926, 932–38.

high ground to the west and north, but the adjacent hills of the southern and eastern flanks were populated and controlled by Armenians. Since both nations had equal access to the plain, they could justly claim it when it was in the possession of their neighbors. Of all the regions in northeast Turkey the Artani is the most deserving of the epithet "march."

As a Georgian and Armenian district, Klarjet'i is somewhat problematic. From Pseudo-Movsēs as well as other sources we learn that Klarjet'i extended north from the borders of Tayk' to encompass the mountains along the east bank of the Çoruh Nehri; it reached its northern terminus between Evardekāt Dağ and Kordevan Dağ.¹¹⁵ This district is not so clearly defined at the southeast. The continuous line of the lower Arsiani terminates at Harasan Dağ. To the south the mountains are not aligned in long continuous ranges; the scattered peaks and most of the resulting valleys are oriented on an east-west axis. This feature would facilitate an active intercourse with the adjacent regions of Armenia and consequently a change in the alignment of the boundaries. The eastern border of the modern Turkish province of Artvin is on a north-south axis through the lower Arsiani. Just south of Harasan Dağ the provincial line makes an abrupt turn to the west for 38 km before turning to the south. In the medieval period this indented region, which is between Harasan Dağ and the two northern districts of Tayk' (Čakk' and Koł), constituted the southern, or Armenian, sector of Klarjet'i. There is no sharp division between the latter and the Georgian-dominated northern sector; both nations could occupy Klarjet'i simultaneously.¹¹⁶ Since no medieval churches or fortresses of Armenian construction have been located yet in the northern

sector, we may tentatively conclude that even in periods of Armenian ascendancy this area remained in Georgian hands.

Because of the incompleteness of my field survey in the Marchlands, it is impossible at present to draw a line across the modern topography so as to divide northern Tayk' from the southern sector of Klarjet'i. Pseudo-Movsēs tells us that the districts west of the Çoruh Nehri between northern Tayk' and the Black Sea are Nigal, Mruł, and Mrit.¹¹⁷ Collectively, the three regions make up the greater part of Egeria, which served as the western boundary for Klarjet'i and occasionally for the premedieval province of Tayk'.¹¹⁸ For a certain prolonged period prior to the early ninth century southeastern Egeria may have become Lower Tao.

Neither the architectural, geographical, or textual evidence can give the slightest support to the claims that Armenian Gugark' extended to the northwestern summits of the Pontic range. Those who have made such assertions have been victims of the ambiguous history of the region. Cyril Toumanoff has proposed a highly original method for dealing with the province of Gugark'.¹¹⁹ Because it was the center for one of the four *vitaxates*, the territorial limits of Gugark' can be manifested in three different ways. A *vitaxa* (Armenian: *bdeašx*; Georgian: *bitiaḥš*), or viceroy, was created by Tigran II (the Great, 95–56 B.C.) to administer each of the newly conquered regions in the periphery of Armenia. In its broadest sense the *vitaxa* of Gugark' and the princely house directly administered the province and the adjacent regions. In his compilation of the Georgian districts Pseudo-Movsēs lists Klarjet'i and Artani as having been part of Armenia in recent memory.¹²⁰ Gugark' in a more narrow sense may simply be the province with smaller, neighboring principalities allied to it. In its most restrictive form it could be a nuclear principality. It is for this reason that Strabo separates Cholarzēnē (Klarjet'i) from Gōgarēnē (Gugark'). Likewise, Movsēs Xorenac'i in his *Patmut' iwn Hayoc'*¹²¹ gives a list of appendages to the House of Gugark'; later these are incorporated into a province around

¹¹⁵ See Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, 354–57. Just west of the Çoruh Nehri and adjacent to Klarjet'i is the district of Nigali. Artvin is one of the important sites within its boundaries. See Toumanoff, *Studies*, 439.

¹¹⁶ Ptolemy (*Geog.*, ed. Müller, 937 f) provides some indirect evidence for the bipartite nature of Klarjet'i in ancient times. He remarks that the lands of Armenia in the northern regions are isolated between the Euphrates, Kur(a), and Araxes rivers; Katarzēnē is located near (παρά) the Moschikoi Mts. above Bocha. Bocha, the Armenian district of Boḫa/Buxa, is located in Tayk'. This may indicate that the Armenian Katarzēnē (Klarjet'i) is positioned between the mountains northeast of Erzurum and Harasan Dağ. Agat'angelos (*History of the Armenians*, trans. and comm. R. Thomson [Albany, 1979], 376 f) indicates that the Armenian Klarjet'i is at the farthest border of Armenia. See also: Procopius *Aed.* 3.3.9 and *BP* 2.24.14; Toumanoff, *Studies*, 204, 442 note 22, 451 note 53, 458 note 93; Adontz, *Armenia*, 15 f, 21 f, 384 note 42; and Hübschmann, *Ortsnamen*, 211–13, 357.

¹¹⁷ Pseudo-Movsēs Xorenac'i (above, note 112), 35.

¹¹⁸ Adontz, *Armenia*, 23; and First Preliminary Report, 36 note 105.

¹¹⁹ Toumanoff, *Studies*, 468 f.

¹²⁰ If one is inclined to accept a highly improbable post-7th-century date for the composition of the *Ašxarhač' oyc'*, then Pseudo-Movsēs may be referring to the occupation of these districts by Adarnase I (ca. 772).

¹²¹ Movsēs Xorenac'i, *History of the Armenians*, trans. R. Thomson (Cambridge, Mass., 1978), 140.

the original dynastic seat.¹²² Here Movsēs makes no mention of Artani and Klarjet'i.

From the Pharnabazid period through the eleventh century it is certain that some of the border regions of Gugark' changed hands between the Iberians and Armenians.¹²³ The Armenians never occupied the regions west of the lower Arsiani Mountains until the Ottoman period when large numbers settled in Ardanuç and Artvin. Depending on political conditions, the Iberians could descend from their mountain strongholds and oc-

cupy the western and northern flanks of the Artani. The vulnerability of the lowlands, especially along the banks of rivers, explains in part why Georgian and Armenian society was not urbanized in the medieval period. Civilian settlements were usually hidden in the well-defended mountainous regions and occasionally along the edges of a valley. In a few cases (e.g., Oltu and Ardanuç) a wall extended from a prominent garrison fort to encompass a small town.

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¹²² Toumanoff, *Studies*, 468 f.
¹²³ Toumanoff, *Studies*, 185, 446 f, 466, 470–72, 474 f, 483, 490, 499; and J. Markwart, *Ērānšahr nach der Geographie des Ps. Moses Xorenac'i* (Berlin, 1901), 166, 168–70. Unfortunately, the accounts of the Muslim geographers can shed no light on the political divisions in the Marchlands. They either ignored the region or had only a cursory understanding of it. In the 10th-century *Hudūd al-'Ālam* ('*The Regions of the World*,' *A Persian Geography*, trans. and comm. V. Minorsky, 2nd ed. [London, 1970], 32, 157, 421 f, 456) the Marchlands are loosely interpreted as being part of Georgia. The account of al-Mas'ūdī is slightly more precise; see Maçoudi, *Les prairies d'or*, trans. C. de Meynard and P. de Courteille, II (Paris, 1914), 65–70, 74 f.

Much of the exaggerated Armenian claim over the pre-Turkish Pontos is based on the activities of the mythical founders of the Arsacids (see Movsēs Xorenac'i, *History* [above, note 121], 82, 135, 145, 147 f note 7) and the all too chauvinistic medieval chronicles (cf. *Yovhannēs Draxanakert'i, History of Armenia*, trans. and comm. K. Maksoudian, Diss. [Columbia Univ., New York], University Microfilms International [1973], 135, 149, 155, 323, 330, and Toumanoff, *Studies*, 489, 492).

Addendum: In my First Preliminary Report on the Marchlands (21 f) I recorded the surviving line of a Greek inscription in the church of Oltu castle. In August 1985, two years after I last visited Oltu, a junior fellow of Dumbarton Oaks, Mr. Peter Heather, photographed the same epigraph. His photo shows that the left half of the inscriptional fragment has been mutilated. Fragments of mortar now removed from the right half reveal that the penultimate letter is certainly an *ēta*. Considering the frequency of vowel interchange, an *ēta* here would make "Iberia" the most sensible reading. Cf. N. Adontz, "Notes arméno-byzantines," *Byz* 10 (1935), 171 f.

Note: The final preliminary report on the Marchlands of northeast Turkey will appear in *DOP* 42 (1988).